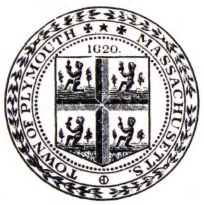
# The Plymouth Compact of 1949

## A Guidebook To PLYMOUTH'S FUTURE

# *The Plymouth Compact of 1949*

is the report of the Special Survey and Coordinating Committee appointed by the Selectmen in the year 1946 by authority of the following Vote of the Town at the annual Town Meeting held on March 23, 1946:

> VOTED: That the Town appropriate the sum of $200.00 for the use of a committee, to be appointed by the Selectmen, to make, or cause to be made, a comprehensive survey and study of the needs and requirements of the Town with respect to buildings, parks, services, and facilities; to study the advisability of consolidating town departments and activities in the interest of efficiency, economy, and coordination. Said committee to submit a written report with recommendations to the next annual Town Meeting.



Pursuant to this Vote the Board of Selectmen of the year 1946 composed of:

James T. Frazier — William H. Barrett
Paul W. Bittinger — Arthur E. Blackmer
Herbert H. Lanman

appointed the following Committee:

A. Linwood Ellis — Franklin A. Hebard
Charles MacKinnon — Amedeo V. Sgarzi
Alton D. Edes — Henry Keyserling
Morris G. Einstein

An interim report of the Committee was submitted to the Town at the annual Town Meeting held on March 22, 1947, at which time it was

> VOTED: That the Town appropriate the sum of $5,000.00 for the use of the Special Study and Coordination Committee appointed under Article 80 of the last annual Town Meeting for the purpose of continuing the work of said Committee.

Pursuant to this Vote the Committee engaged the services of

WHITMAN and HOWARD
Boston, Mass.
Engineers and Municipal Planners

and in the drafting and preparation of its report the Committee was assisted by

WILLIAM A. SCHERFF
Editorial Consultant

In accordance with the above-quoted Votes of the Town this report is respectfully submitted.

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# *Foreword*

329 years ago a small band of people landed on the shores of what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts. Before landing they wrote what is now famous as the "Mayflower Compact." That document turned out to be the basis of our "Bill of Rights," the very foundation of our American principles of Democracy. It set down on paper some simple rules for living together. It was, primarily, a plan for the guidance of the conduct of those early Pilgrims.

Now, the more than 13,000 citizens of Plymouth have need for another Compact—the Compact of 1949. The old Compact of 1620 provided for the moral and spiritual growth of our community. It did not provide for its physical growth. Planning ahead for streets, sewerage systems, water systems, traffic, schools, police and fire protection was unknown in those days. The need simply did not exist. Our predecessors did not have to meet the complexities of modern life. It was only natural that the town just grew.

This new Compact of 1949 must take up where the old left off. Today, Plymouth is home for better than 13,000 people instead of a mere 100. It covers nearly 100 square miles. It has over 5,000 dwelling units instead of a dozen. It must expand each summer to meet the needs of summer residents and 40,000 tourists who come to see the birthplace of America. Running the town of Plymouth is a complex and difficult business with the result that little time has been given to future planning.

So it is vital for Plymouth people to pioneer again. Such planning is vital if the community is to have a healthy and satisfying growth. It is the kind of planning that demands experienced, professional guidance, a careful attention to

details, and above all, a road map that points the direction in which we should travel. This book provides that road map. It is no more than a road map, however, for the proposals made here are not effective without the united support of every Plymouthian.

At the Annual Town Meeting of 1946, you as a citizen of Plymouth recognized the need for a master plan when you authorized the Selectmen to set up a special Committee. In 1947, after you had heard the interim report of this Committee, you again proved your desire to have a master plan when you voted the sum of $5,000 to conduct a survey.

Now that study is complete. The special Committee, appointed by the Selectmen, has worked for two years, without compensation and in a spirit of public service. Under their guidance, the firm of Whitman and Howard, municipal planners, made an analysis of our needs. This analysis, tempered by your Committee's intimate knowledge of Plymouth, is presented to you as the road map we need.

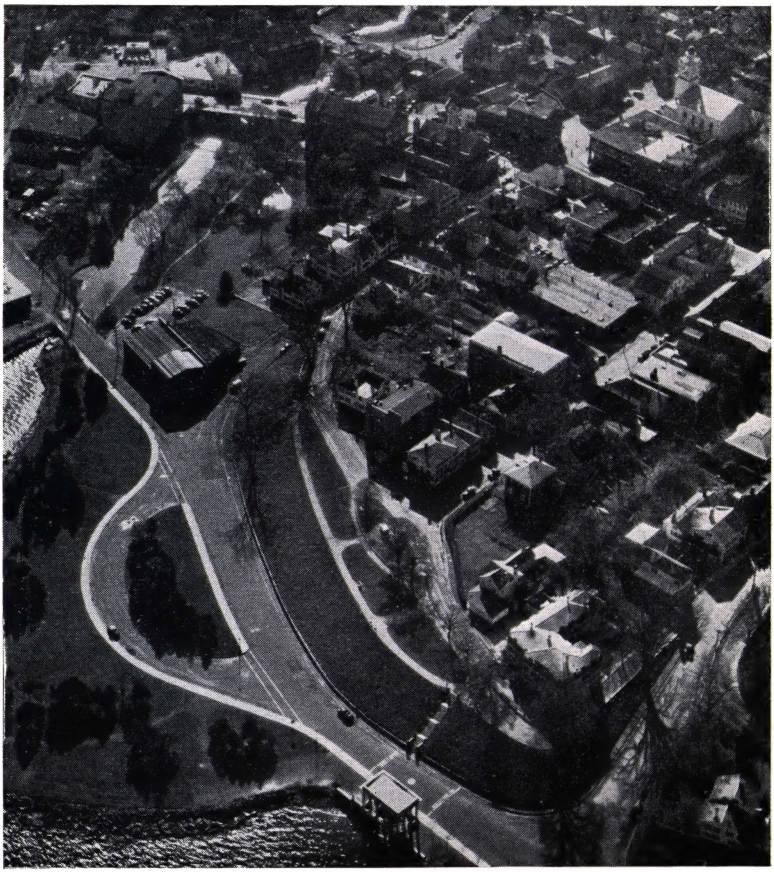
In its present form this Compact of 1949 is merely a plan for the future development and enrichment of Plymouth. It is only by the support of a majority of our townspeople that this plan can become a living, active program. It needs your united support, just as the Compact of 1620 was supported by the Pilgrims.

This is not a program just to *spend* money. It is a way to get more for your money. If carried out over the years it will effect economies in town government. It will assure good schools and other public buildings, properly located. It provides for improved water, sewerage and protective facilities. It will give each of us a better town, a home town of which we can all be proud, if given your united support.

February, 1949. Special Survey and Coordinating Committee.

# *Plymouth As It Is*

In this first section of the Compact we take a look at Plymouth as it is today. We must look at our town objectively. We must stand off and see Plymouth as others see it. As citizens we are naturally prejudiced in favor of our home



town . . . or we are so accustomed to our surroundings that we give them little or no thought.

If we are going to be fair to ourselves we must look with a critical but constructive eye. We must look carefully at every factor that can or will affect our lives and welfare now and in the future. There are eight such basic factors. They are:

1. The Topography
2. Population Trends
3. Public Buildings and Schools
4. Playgrounds and Parks
5. Traffic Flow
6. Public Utilities
7. Housing
8. Retail Trade and Industry

Let's proceed, then, to examine each of these eight items as they exist today.

## *1 Topography*

The topography of Plymouth imposes many problems for the town. For example, steep-sided valleys form natural barriers to a unified street system. They prevent, as in the case of Town Brook, the merger of parts of the town. Steep grades in some streets make for difficult parking and prohibit the extension of built-up areas.

In a larger way, the Pine Hills (containing one of the highest points of land on the Atlantic Coast), prevent the integration of various population centers within the town. Plymouth proper and Manomet are excellent examples of this point.

The tremendous area of Plymouth, potentially an asset, now imposes other problems in administration and public works. We have 17 miles of waterfront, a large natural harbor . . . but they need constant attention to keep them usable. The total area of Plymouth is 97.5 square miles. Within it are 220 miles of improved roads, 147 acres of town parks, the town forest, the Miles Standish State Forest, bird sanctuaries and game preserves.

Maintenance of this extensive system of town parks and roads is a real problem for the Park and Highway Departments. Police and Fire protection for nearly 100 square miles is naturally more difficult than in a small, concentrated area. Finally, our population problem, as well as area and topography, add to our difficulties as you will see later.

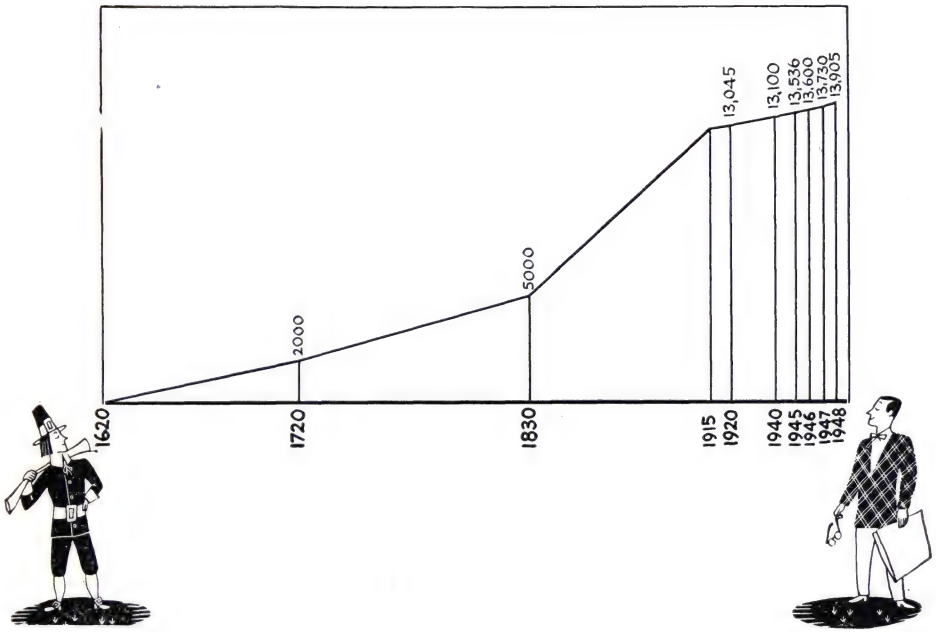
Nevertheless, if we keep topography and area in mind as we plan, we can turn these potential assets into actual assets. We can make them contribute to our welfare rather than let them continue as burdens on the town.

## 2 Population Trends

When more people leave a town, or die than move into it or are born in it, we have a declining population trend. That's an unhealthy economic sign and one to be watched.

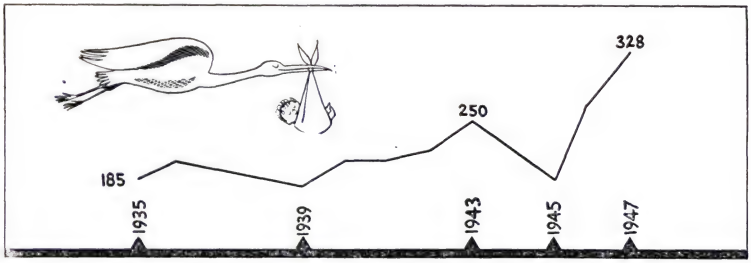
Plymouth came very close to that condition in the period from 1915 to 1940. In those 25 years the town showed an increase in population of only 175 people. Actually, more families moved away than came to Plymouth, as the actual excess of births over deaths in Plymouth would have increased the population by considerably more than 175.

Fortunately, this loss of permanent population seems to have stopped. The 5 years from 1940 to 1945 produced a




*ABOVE—This chart shows the growth of our population from 1620 to 1948.*

*BELOW—This chart shows the birth rate in Plymouth from 1935 to 1947. The increasing birth rate which started in 1945 reached a peak in 1947.*



definite upturn in population. While this is too short a period upon which to predict long-term population trends, we do know that more people are again coming to Plymouth than are leaving. It is a welcome revision upward in the population trend.

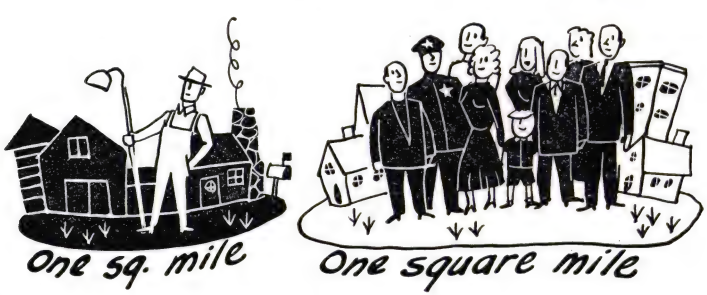
Sound planning will insure and accelerate this trend. More commerce and more industry will bring more permanent residents. Good living conditions, adequate housing, fair taxes and competent handling of municipal affairs always attract more people to the town that has them to offer.

## DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Although the town of Plymouth covers nearly 100 square miles, about 90% of us live in a ten square mile area. That's a population density of 1200 persons per square mile, equalling that of many city areas which we consider "crowded." This heavily populated area extends from Chiltonville to the Kingston line.

This concentration of population started in the early years of the town. Families first huddled together for their common protection. Then the topography influenced and limited the directions in which we could spread out. In more recent years the availability of public utilities, such as transportation, water supply and sewerage systems became a limiting factor.

The remaining area of the town, about 90 square miles,



shows a density of less than 16 persons per square mile. We have, therefore, a town with areas varying from city to rural population densities and extending for 17 miles.

These conditions pose a very real problem. The interests of both groups must be considered. These conditions illustrate, once more, how many factors can and do affect our welfare and why careful, over-all planning is needed to guide us in the future development of Plymouth.

## THE SUMMER POPULATION

While the proper growth and distribution of our permanent population must be our major concern, we cannot overlook the summer residents and tourists.

Each year, since the war, Plymouth has entertained on an average of 40,000 visitors from the 48 states in the Union. They represent a temporary but heavy burden on our public utilities, on our transportation systems; they triple our traffic and parking problems. But we want these visitors so they must enter into our planning.

Then, during these same summer months, the occupants of over 1200 summer homes and camps swell the total. Most of these summer dwellings are in sparsely populated areas and have been a powerful factor in the physical development of those sections. They do put an extra load on police and fire protection and on the Highway Department. This all tends to increase costs and the need for the utmost efficiency in government.

Your Committee realizes that most of you are aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of our increased summer population. It seemed advisable to restate them here to impress on you the extra problems this temporary population imposes and its relationship to proper planning. But again, this population represents a valuable economic asset to our town and as such must enter into our planning.

*Plymouth as it is*

# 3 *Public Buildings*

The Town of Plymouth is 329 years old. We might take the position that "We've gotten along all right for all this time so why change now?"

The fact is that Plymouth, like most older communities has outgrown many of its public buildings. Others, because of the direction of growth of the town, are now poorly located. Several of our school buildings are old, and all are overcrowded. The estimated increase of 15% in the elementary school population by 1952 will further aggravate this condition.

As another example, the Town House while well-located, is now too small to properly serve the community. All of which brings us face to face with the fact that we must, over the next ten to twenty years, replace or relocate many of these public buildings.

The temptation is always present to use existing sites or other town-owned land rather than to select a new location to serve the best interests of the town. The superficial reason for this is to save a small percentage of the total cost. Unfortunately, it is political expedience rather than good judgment which makes this course attractive. Direct and indirect economic loss invariably result from such planning.

The selection of new sites is of first importance. They should be selected on these sound principles: Each site should serve the community most efficiently now. By careful planning, it can continue to serve the community for years to come. Each site should be large enough to allow for expansion and a grouping of buildings where logical and desirable. Each location should have a sensible relation to other loca-

tions as well as to community needs.

When these principles are followed, we achieve the most economical operation of town equipment and departments. We will best serve the convenience of the public and can achieve an extra dividend in the way of an interesting and pleasingly beautiful arrangement of town buildings.

There are two major public buildings that seem to be adequate for the foreseeable future. They are the Police Station and Central Fire Station. Both of these buildings have in the past been subject for some local discussion. A thorough study indicates very conclusively that the buildings are reasonably adequate and will serve the Town for many years if given normal care and maintenance. An increase in the size of either of these buildings is possible if and when necessary. The present sites of these buildings fit in perfectly with the topography and general layout of the Town, and ideally serve their functional uses.

## 4 *Playgrounds and Parks*

The playgrounds are for our children. At present, there are five such playgrounds for smaller children in Plymouth and North Plymouth, excluding schoolyards. This is not enough, nor are the locations right. The playgrounds for older children up to high school age are adequate in number but inadequate in equipment and protection.

Athletic fields for organized sports consist of Stephens Field and the Standish Avenue Playground. Stephens Field is too exposed and too small for such sports as baseball and football, although now used for these purposes by the High School. The Standish Avenue Playground, while adequate in size, is not practical for school use because of its

location one and one-half miles from the high school. This distance does not permit of its use for physical education and everyday sports practice.

Now let's look at our parks. As has been pointed out, Plymouth is fortunate in that it has miles of shorefront and virtually unlimited natural woodlands and ponds. Morton Park alone has 100 acres of beautiful woodland and seven miles of roads around Little Pond and Billington Sea. It is adequate in size for the thousands of people who visit it every summer. The development and maintenance of this Park have been restricted so that we have realized only a fraction of its potential natural beauty. By developing this natural beauty it can be made nearly self-sustaining.

The Indian Reservation Park in Manomet, with a well-located and popular camp ground, is reasonably well equipped but here again maintenance is at a minimum. It also has possibilities of being made more self-sustaining.

On the other hand, the in-town parks are generally well-maintained but inadequate in size. The Nelson Street Playground contains a bathing beach, bathhouse and trailer park but is not properly developed. The parks at Plymouth Rock and Brewster Gardens are equally inadequate.

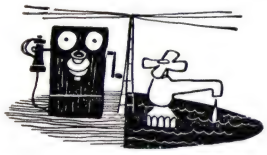
However, the total result is that Plymouth is burdened with parks beyond the capacity of the Park Department to maintain them and those areas which could be made profitable to the town are neglected.

Our bathing beaches are also in need of considerable capital improvements if we are to provide adequate facilities and reduce the present costly maintenance. A public bathing beach is needed in North Plymouth.

None of these are insurmountable problems. Each can be corrected with proper planning. What is more important is the fact that they can be made more nearly self-sustaining by producing a reasonable revenue for the town.

## 5 *Traffic Flow*

The traffic and parking conditions as they now exist in Plymouth are not good. Some corrective measures, such as the installation of parking meters and the new State by-pass are now in progress. By good planning we can add substantially to the relief these will give when completed.



## 6 *Public Utilities*

The public utilities—water, sewer system, gas, electricity, transportation — are, with the exception of the sewer system, reasonably adequate and now serve the majority of the population.

The water and sewer systems are owned by the town. The water system, with over 81 miles of mains, is being extended and renewed on a planned schedule.

The sewer system, because it relies on a gravity flow, has its limitations. Equally important is the fact that sewage is disposed of untreated in Plymouth Harbor. The resulting pollution has caused the State Department of Public Health to advise the Town to provide adequate treatment. Compliance with this request is mandatory by law. Treatment, satisfactory to the Commonwealth, requires immediate attention and will involve a heavy expenditure.

Gas and electricity are provided by the Plymouth Gas Light Company and the Plymouth County Electric Company. Extension and improvement of these services can be counted upon to progress with the town.

Transportation, a vital factor in any community, is in a period of change. Local travel within Plymouth and to neighboring towns is provided by the bus lines of the Plymouth and Brockton and Interstate Transportation Companies. Railroad passenger and freight service to Boston is presently provided by the Old Colony Division of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. As you all know, continuance of railroad passenger service is indefinite. This matter is in the hands of a special town committee.

## 7 *Housing*

Plymouth is primarily a residential, home-owning town. Of about 4,000 permanent families, some 40% own their own homes. 50% live in one-family dwellings, about 25% in two-family dwellings and 25% in multiple dwellings.

Of the more than 5,000 dwelling units in Plymouth, 1200 are summer homes. Another 1,000 units are 75 years old or older. Many of these are sound buildings of architectural beauty and historical significance. Others, however, are obsolete and unfit for habitation even though now occupied out of necessity.

The greatest concentration of these substandard dwellings is in the center of Plymouth proper and in the neighborhood of Town Brook. They constitute an unhealthy condition for the occupants. They are a blight on the town. While this area must eventually be improved, as suggested later, we recognize that this change must be subject to more favorable housing conditions. This improvement can be accelerated by public housing provided through a local housing authority. Over 100 Massachusetts communities have adopted this method of approaching their housing problem.

Finally, our houses are highly concentrated in the area from Chiltonville to the Kingston line. This is obvious from the figures on population density. Actually, the densities vary within this area, the older sections being even more crowded. There is, however, one section — known as Cold Spring — located between Plymouth and North Plymouth, which offers a real opportunity for housing expansion.

## 8 *Retail Trade and Industry*

Plymouth is located over 20 miles from the nearest city and is, of necessity, a separate economic unit. It is the largest community within this area and most of its wage earners are employed within the town.

Manufacturing is the largest source of income, employing 36% of the wage earners in 1945. The trend, however, for the past 25 years has been toward less invested capital and less employment in manufacturing. In 1920 there were about 3,000 manufacturing workers in industries with an invested capital of about 24 million dollars. By 1944 there were only 2,000 such workers in industries with an invested capital of 18 million dollars.

Obviously, our planning must provide inducements to industry to safeguard the future of manufacturing in Plymouth. The above figures indicate the importance of encouraging the expansion of existing plants and of bringing new industries to town.

Fishing, a basic Plymouth industry, has again shown an upward trend in recent years. It has increased in volume to a point where existing facilities are inadequate. Plymouth is

ideally located for this industry. Modern facilities, now lacking, would accelerate the growth of this industry.

Cranberry growing, a native industry dating back to Colonial times, has grown rapidly in recent years. Plymouth is located in the heart of this cranberry country and benefits as the principal trading center of the area.

Retail-wholesale trade is the next largest source of income in Plymouth. It employed about 27% of the workers in 1939, the last year with complete figures.

The largest town within a 20 mile radius, Plymouth is the natural trading center for year round population of 40,000 people. Plymouth should grow as a retail center. How fast and how well depends on how well we plan.

## THE SUMMER TRADE

Both our 1200 summer resident families and the 40,000 tourists contribute materially to retail trade, to service establishments, to the construction industry.

The benefits from these summer visitors can be retained and increased if they are considered in our planning. Plymouth has national prominence as an historic site. It has the natural advantage of a harbor, miles of coastline, hundreds of lakes, many square miles of woodland. Its population is large enough to serve the needs of these visitors. These conditions are equalled by few communities in the country.

Again, we should take advantage of these natural assets through improvement of traffic conditions, parking facilities and adequate anchorage for visiting yachts and other vessels. The Town is presently being aided in the attraction of visitors by several groups who are interested in a wider appreciation of our historical assets. This work is costing the Town no money, but the Town can capitalize on it by coordinating its plans to take full advantage of the work these organizations are doing.

# *Plymouth As It Can Be Under the Compact of 1949*

We have been looking at Plymouth, without bias, as it is today. Now, let's look at Plymouth as it can — and will be — with your wholehearted support. Remember, this isn't a plan to spend money just for the sake of spending it . . . or to put on a front. It is a plan to make the most of our natural assets, to prepare for the indicated trend of events, and by so doing to get more for the money we will spend anyhow.

In this section definite proposals are made for your consideration, and cover these subjects: 1. Traffic Flow; 2. Public Buildings; 3. Playgrounds and Parks; 4. Retail Trade and Industry; 5. Public Utilities.

Topography, population and housing are also discussed. It should be kept in mind, however, that these three are either natural phenomena over which we have no control, or are controlled by the law of supply and demand. This does not mean that we should ignore these subjects. We can use the indicated developments in these fields to guide and direct us in our planning.

For example, we can't change the topography of Plymouth. But we know its advantages and disadvantages so that we can plan our street systems, traffic flow and zoning laws or as with Population Trends, we can plan for the expected growth of our school population which is rather accurately predicted by the birth rate of recent years.

Housing is, of course, subject to the law of supply and demand. Yet an adequate building code and moderate zoning laws will assure sound future expansion in this field.

You will, therefore, find all of these inter-related subjects discussed in detail in this section of the Compact. In the next section you will find a survey of our present Town Government organization and recommendations for its improvement. No change in the basic form of government is contemplated. Coordination and consolidation of departments is recommended — and needed — to get more for the money we now spend. Town Government continues to grow more expensive and must be put on a businesslike basis if we are to adequately and efficiently administer a bigger and better Plymouth.

# *The Plymouth Compact*

*as it affects*

## *I. Traffic Flow*

Traffic trouble is not peculiar to Plymouth. It is a 20th century problem of national scope. Each city and town has its own peculiar problems. Those of Plymouth can be solved if we will look at the problem of proper traffic movement, not only in terms of our being able to park easily, but in terms of the many factors that are really involved.

We admit that parking, and being able to drive comfortably from one part of town to another with reasonable speed, is our immediate personal problem. At the same time we must realize that these two items of personal convenience are affected by these other inter-related elements:

(1) Through traffic to the Cape and Boston
(2) Local Traffic
(3) Front-door truck deliveries

So, let's tackle this problem with all of these complicating elements in mind. Your committee has done so and it is on this basis that the following recommendations are made.

(1) *Through Traffic.* Up to this time all through traffic to the Cape and Boston is forced to use Court and Main Streets. We all know what this does to Plymouth during the heaviest travel months of June, July, August and September. We are fortunate that the new State highway is under construction. It will, when completed, eliminate this primary through traffic. Estimates by the State Department of Public Works indicate that 50% of the present through traffic will be eliminated by this new by-pass. This through traffic is now slowed down by the bottleneck of local traffic and street-parking. You spend much more time than necessary getting from your home to the shopping district or to

another section of town. Proposals made later in this section will add to the relief to be afforded by the by-pass.

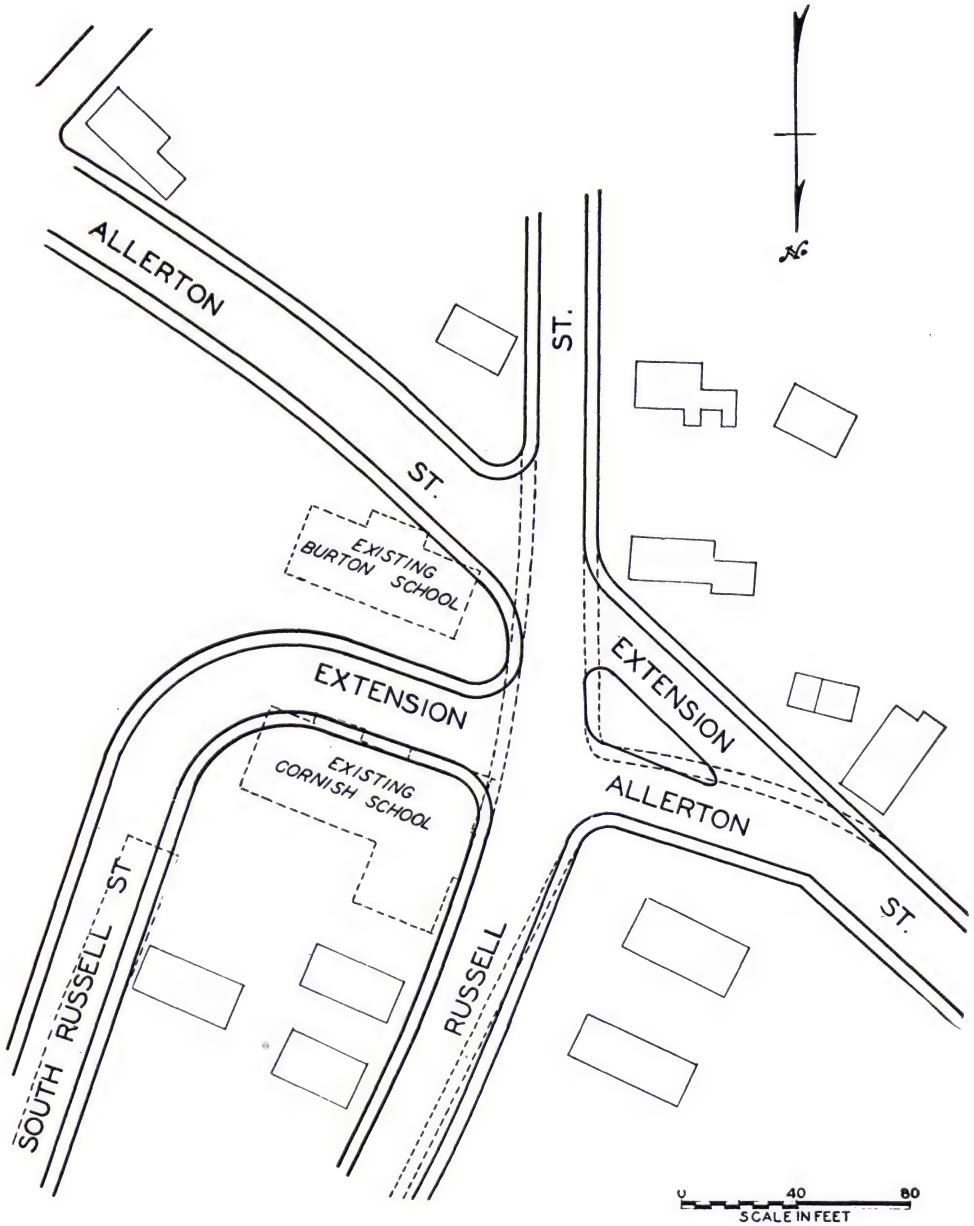
(2) *Local Traffic.* This is divided into two types; (a) purely local traffic, i.e., shoppers from Plymouth, Kingston, Carver, Duxbury, Manomet and persons attending court or others wishing to stop in the Plymouth business center; (b) local through traffic, i.e., wishing to travel between the north and south of town and visitors to Plymouth Rock and points of historical interest but who do not want to stop in the business section. This represents the other half of our Main and Court Street traffic.

The Compact recommends two convenient by-passes to eliminate an important amount of this remaining traffic. Both are long-range projects. They are described below.

*Shore Drive.* This is the name applied to a route starting at the east side of Court Street, just south of Nelson Street. It would follow the abandoned Middleboro Railroad right-of-way to the Old Colony Railroad at Lothrop Street and cross this on an overpass to Water Street. Shore Drive would continue along the waterfront to Union Street. At this point, it would continue on a new right-of-way to be acquired, and lead directly to the present junction of Bradford and Sandwich Streets.

Shore Drive will provide an easy and pleasant route for all local through traffic originating north of Nelson Street and south of Bradford Street. It will provide an attractive approach to the waterfront and Plymouth Rock. It is a logical improvement that can make a major correction in traffic conditions, both for our visitors and ourselves.

*Allerton Street Extension.* The Compact proposes that Allerton Street be extended from Russell to Summer Street. This extension will supply a highway for much needed traffic circulation around the Plymouth business center on the west side of town. It is proposed that this extension




PROPOSED ALLERTON STREET EXTENSION
AND SOUTH RUSSELL STREET EXTENSION
AT PRESENT CORNISH-BURTON SCHOOL SITE

WHITMAN & HOWARD, ENGINEERS,
BOSTON, MASS.

pass directly west of Burial Hill and join Summer Street near Market Street.

This improvement will handle local through traffic generating in the Allerton Street area; through traffic moving north from the Market-Pleasant Street area; visitors to Forefathers' Monument and Burial Hill.

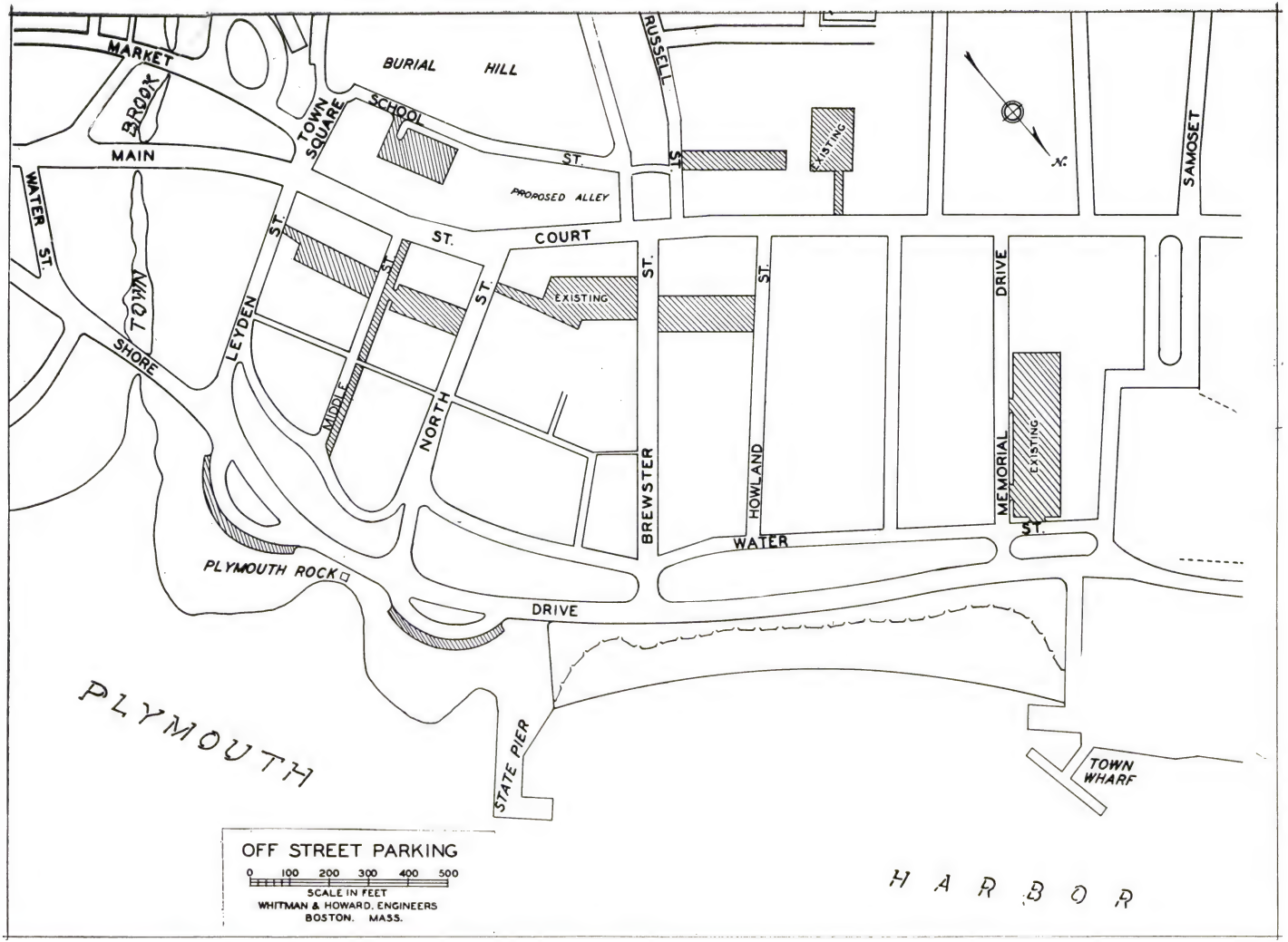
It does more than improve our traffic conditions. It provides easier access to, and a more attractive view of Burial Hill, an important historical asset of the town. The view from Burial Hill, looking west, will also be greatly improved. Finally, this extension provides easy access to the proposed new Town House discussed later and to Town Square.

*Off-Street Parking.* One cause of traffic congestion has been long-term parking by the management and employees of business concerns and by persons with business in town of more than ordinary duration. The newly installed parking meters have removed these types of long-time parkers from the main street but do not eliminate the need of such parkers for adequate accommodations.

Two remedies are proposed. The most important is a provision for off-street parking. Such off-street parking areas can be placed in two classes; (a) temporary, dictated by expediency and using town-owned land not now in use; (b) permanent parking places, using those areas recommended in this Compact.

Thus, temporary parking space will become available between Market and Main Street Extension as the town acquires land in accordance with the Compact. A permanent parking space on vacant land on School Street, can be authorized now. Only access by a foot-path to Main Street is necessary to make this a convenient parking area.

Other parking spaces are proposed in the rear of buildings on some parts of Main Street and Court Street as follows: (1) on the easterly side of Main Street between Leyden and


MARKET
BROOK
BURIAL HILL
TOWN SQUARE
SCHOOL
ST.
MAIN
PROPOSED ALLEY
RUSSELL
EXISTING
N.
SAMOSET
WATER ST.
TOWN
SHORE
LEYDEN
ST.
COURT
MIDDLE
NORTH
BREWSTER
HOWLAND
DRIVE
MEMORIAL
WATER
PLYMOUTH ROCK
DRIVE
PLYMOUTH
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WHITMAN & HOWARD, ENGINEERS
BOSTON, MASS.

Middle Streets; (2) between Middle and North Streets; (3) between Brewster and Howland Streets; (4) at the rear of the buildings on the west side of Court Street opposite the area between Howland and Chilton Streets.

These proposed off-street parking areas are indicated on the maps, along with certain other areas designed to provide additional, convenient parking for the future development of our business area.

It is also suggested that further relief of the parking problem can be obtained by widening Middle Street. This will provide accommodations for moderately long-time parking for a considerable number of cars. This is not off-street parking, strictly speaking, but is a helpful additional remedy.

It must be remembered that any expenditure for parking areas is wasted unless the convenience of the public is served. This fundamental requirement has been uppermost in the Committee's mind as these accommodations were prepared.

(3) *Front-Door Truck Deliveries.* Delivery of merchandise to stores is now largely dependent on Main and Court Streets for their access to stores. A by-law requiring night delivery is not practical because of the unreasonable hardship and expense it might cause although some alleviation of front-door delivery has been accomplished by requesting that deliveries be made at night whenever possible.

The practical solution to this part of the traffic problem is to provide access for deliveries to the rear of business establishments. Such access, where possible, has been indicated on the maps accompanying this Compact.

*General Recommendations.* Certain other general recommendations concerning the layout of new streets, and the handling of certain other through and rural roads are made here to consolidate the entire traffic flow plan.

First, Samoset Street should be widened. It is an important through artery leading west from Plymouth. The new State

By-Pass will bring an additional traffic load to it, since it will be the principal connection from the By-Pass to the center of Plymouth.

This heavily traveled State route is now too narrow, varying in width from 30 to 40 feet. It is inadequate and dangerous even for present-day needs. The desirable width — 60 feet — for a highway of this type is impractical due to the costs of acquiring certain properties. However, a minimum of 50 feet is both practical and imperative.

It is recommended that immediate action be taken to establish proposed street lines, and to acquire as rapidly as possible the necessary right-of-way to establish this 50-foot minimum on Samoset Street in the Town of Plymouth.

Second, minimum standards for the layout of all new streets should be adopted. Such standards should apply whether or not there is an announced intention to apply for acceptance as a public street.

It is recommended that these minimum standards be established as follows: minimum over-all width, 40 feet; minimum pavement width 20 feet; provision for the Planning Board to require a greater width where the street may become an important through way; maximum grades of 10% and minimum grades of 1%; a rule prohibiting dead end streets except under unusual circumstances and then, only if a turnaround with a minimum 75-foot radius is provided.

Many existing streets should also be corrected to meet the minimum standards outlined above but it is impractical to make these changes because of undue hardship and high property values. Wherever pressing public needs or low value of the abutting property indicates, however, action should be taken.

We urge the foregoing as an outline of standards to be established immediately. This protective measure could then be followed by a complete and detailed study which will pro-

vide a full code covering street and land-subdivision layout.

Third, certain other through roads and rural roads need comment. Summer Street and Federal Furnace Road are the through route to South Carver. These are paved roads and while in need of repairs in certain in-town portions are in good condition in the rural sections. They are not too heavily traveled and should prove adequate for many years.

Long Pond Road is actually a through road, carrying many hundreds of vehicles daily. The area served, though now largely undeveloped, has great scenic beauty and considerable potential value to the Town of Plymouth. Action to establish street lines for a minimum 60-foot right-of-way; correction of dangerous curves; continuance of the paving through to Cedarville and Route 3, and the necessary acquisition of properties is recommended. It is believed that much of this property can be secured at this time for little or no cost to the town.

## CONCLUSIONS

Traffic flow and control, with its accompanying parking problem, is a most complicated problem affected by many factors. To summarize what has been stated previously in detail, we have in effect said that:

1. A business district should have easy access and convenient parking — for shoppers, for visitors, for deliveries, for owners and employees of businesses.
2. Plymouth now has none of these ideal conditions because of heavy through traffic traveling our main street; limited on-street parking space; inadequate off-street parking areas; front-door truck deliveries.
3. We can correct these conditions by providing convenient by-passes for through traffic; adequate side-street and off-street parking facilities; by the continued use of parking meters; by providing, wherever possible, for rear-door store deliveries.

# *The Plymouth Compact*

*as it affects*

## *II. Public Buildings*

(a) *School Buildings.* The need for new schools has been determined by these facts:

1. Our elementary schools are already overcrowded.
2. The trend of the birth-rate in Plymouth indicates a 15% increase in elementary grade pupils by 1952. This increase will progress through the schools to reach the high school in 1960.
3. Many of our school buildings are obsolete.
4. The locations of several of our schools are poor in terms of present-day needs. Most of the sites are too small for the needed expansion of the school buildings and playgrounds. Other sites are not ideally located with respect to the distribution of the school population.

The recommendations that follow, for new schools and the use or disposal of old schools, have been made with the above conditions in mind and with an eye to present and future economy.

*The Cornish-Burton School.* The pupils in this school are now housed in two, overcrowded, frame buildings at the junctions of Russell and Allerton Streets. There is inadequate playground space. Expansion is impracticable since the property is hemmed in by Burial Hill at the rear and by homes on both sides.

In addition, the proposed reclamation of the large area of land in the High Street section for the purposes described elsewhere in the Compact will eventually remove a considerable source of the school population now served by the present Cornish-Burton School.

These people will presumably relocate in new housing in other sections of the Town.

Therefore, the replacement of the Cornish-Burton School should be on a smaller scale and would best be situated in the area between High, Summer and Russell Streets.

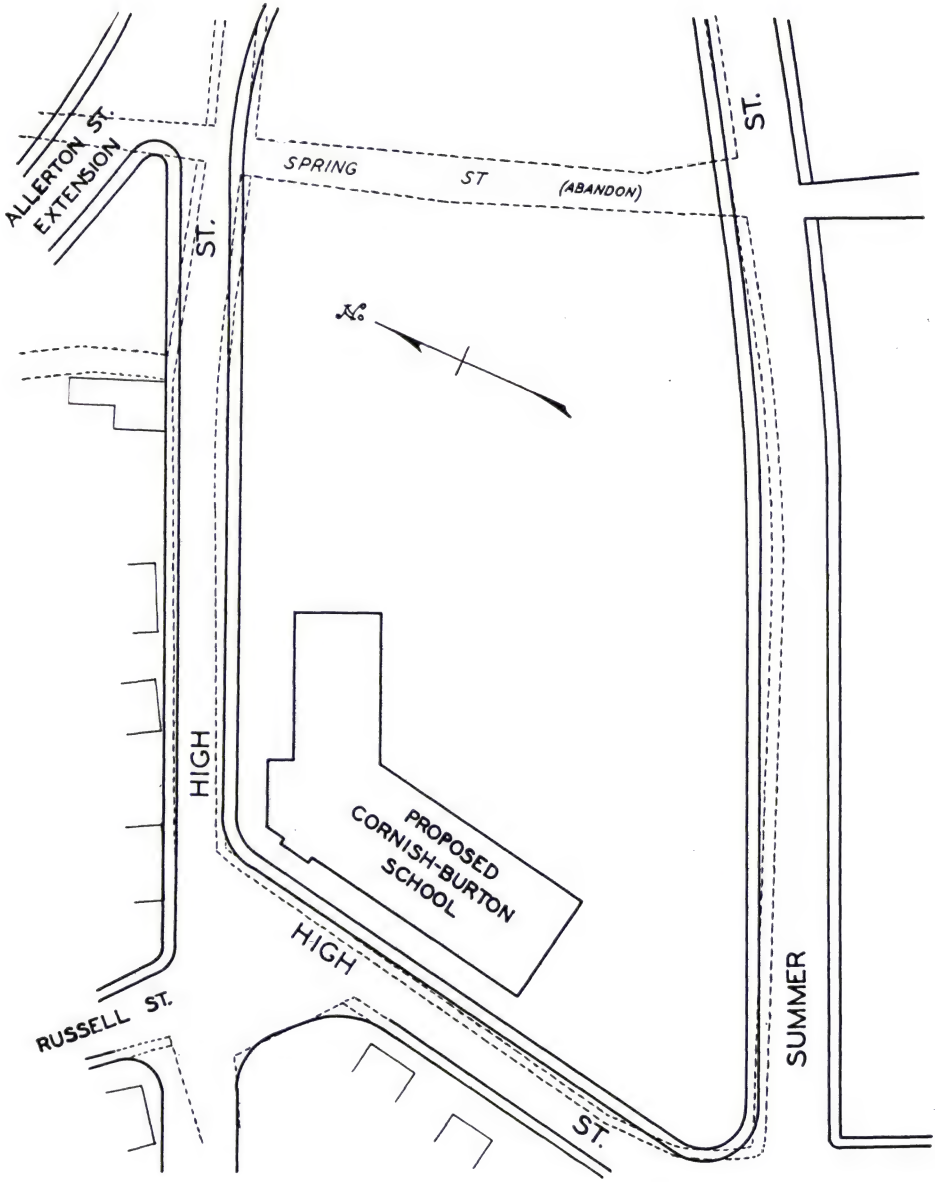
The present location of the Cornish-Burton School is needed for the proper development and treatment of the Burial Hill section, as described in detail elsewhere in the Compact.

It is to be noted that the area now used as a school playground is cut directly out of Burial Hill and the original natural slope should be restored as has already been done on other parts of Burial Hill.

*The Cold Spring School.* The pupils in this area now attend school in an outmoded, two-room schoolhouse on Court Street, opposite Nelson Street. It houses three grades only. The location itself is dangerous because of the heavy traffic and the site is not large enough to take a larger school and to include a playground area of proper size.

It is recommended that this school be replaced upon Town-owned land on Alden Street, known as the Murray property, a large tract lying between Standish Avenue, Alden and Court Streets, purchased by the Town some twenty-five years ago for school use. This area is well located and large enough to permit the construction of a modern one-story building affording maximum fire protection and other safety features for the children.

In view of the likely thinning of school population in the center of the Town and the expected growth of school




PROPOSED CORNISH-BURTON SCHOOL SITE

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SCALE IN FEET

WHITMAN & HOWARD, ENGINEERS,
BOSTON, MASS.

population in this general area it is recommended that this building should be erected as the first step in the Elementary School program.

*The Hedge School.* This is a modern building, in good condition, and should be adequate to serve the North Plymouth area for the foreseeable future.

It is now overcrowded but this condition is due to the attendance of pupils who properly belong in the proposed Cold Spring School and those now transported from outlying districts. The construction of the Cold Spring School, as recommended, will automatically relieve this overcrowding.

*The Mount Pleasant School.* This school is in good condition even though it is an old building. It is well-located but overcrowded.

Because of this and the probability of considerable increase in school population in this section, it is recommended that this school building be improved and proper facilities to satisfy modern requirements be provided.

*The Oak Street School.* This is a small, obsolete building. We recommend that it be abandoned as soon as conditions permit.

*Vocational School.* We do not have a vocational school at present. The importance of such a school, which includes instruction in trades followed by more than half of Plymouth's present working population, has been previously studied and has been recognized by the Town.

A vocational school should be an auxiliary to the High School and the recommended location is adjacent to the High School, on the harbor side, with the entrance on Bradford Street.

Most of the property needed for this project is now part of the High and Junior High School land so that only several small parcels, not now town-owned, need be acquired. Their early purchase is urged.

*The Junior High School.* This building is already inadequate and overcrowded. These conditions will be aggravated by the increased number of pupils who will reach this school before 1960.

A new location, separate from the High School, is provided in the Compact. It is in the block bounded by Union Street, Bradford Street and the proposed extension of Water Street or Shore Drive as it is called in our plans.

No attempt is made here to establish an exact date for the construction of this new Junior High. We do urge the new location as a part of the complete program.

*Plymouth High School.* This is a modern building and now adequate. Expansion of the high school, if and when needed, can be readily accomplished by remodeling and using the present Junior High School Building.

*The Manomet School.* This building is adequate for its present use except that it does need an assembly hall. There are signs of a growth and change in location of the population in Manomet. The trend is not yet clear enough to make specific recommendations but it does appear that a new school building, in a new location, may be needed before many years.

(b) *Other Public Buildings.* There are three buildings, in addition to the schools, which deserve serious consideration under the Compact. They are discussed below.

*The Town House.* The present location was selected by the Pilgrims as the seat of local government. The building itself is over 200 years old and was originally the Court House for the Plymouth area. It has been used continuously ever since and is apparently the oldest seat of local government in continuous use in the country. Because of this historical importance, it is proposed that this building be retained and someday be restored as a memorial.

The building is hopelessly inadequate for modern town

government. It is proposed that a new Town House be built on property adjoining the present location. This general area is central and as good today as it was three hundred years ago. It is the inadequate building that needs replacement.

The new location is on what is now High Street. The new Town House would overlook the proposed "Town Brook Park," and have an excellent view of Plymouth Harbor. The building should be so placed on the site as to become an important central feature of this area.

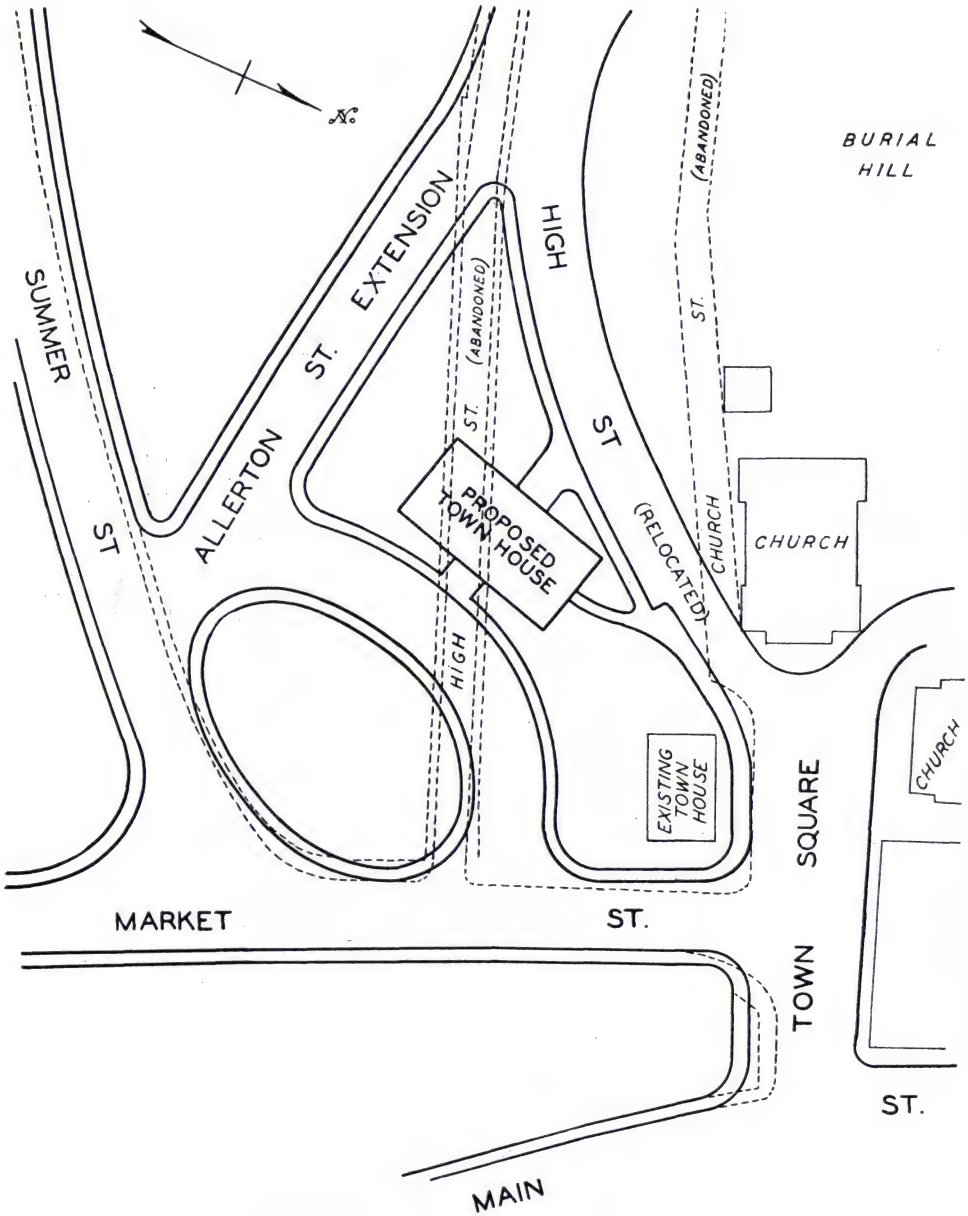
The site proposed includes many obsolete and substandard dwellings. Their removal, when housing conditions permit, will make this more appropriate use of the area possible. If you will examine the map accompanying the Compact you will see how this new Town House location is tied in with certain street changes discussed elsewhere.

*Town Garage.* A Town Garage, in which to house, service and repair all town-owned motor vehicles and heavy equipment associated with public works is needed for more economical operation. Such a building, and unified supervision, is provided in this Compact. This type of operation will result in a saving in operating costs and can more than pay its own way.

It is proposed that this building be located in the area bounded by Summer, High and Edes Streets, a readily accessible and efficient central point.

*The Old High School Building.* This is an outmoded building in poor condition. It is now partially used by various town departments.

Consideration has been given to the possibilities of remodeling this building to make it available for some of the various needs of the town. Undesirable fixed features, its poor location and the excessive cost of remodeling prohibit its use. It is recommended that the building be removed and the land sold as soon as its existing use can be terminated.




PROPOSED TOWN HOUSE SITE

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SCALE IN FEET

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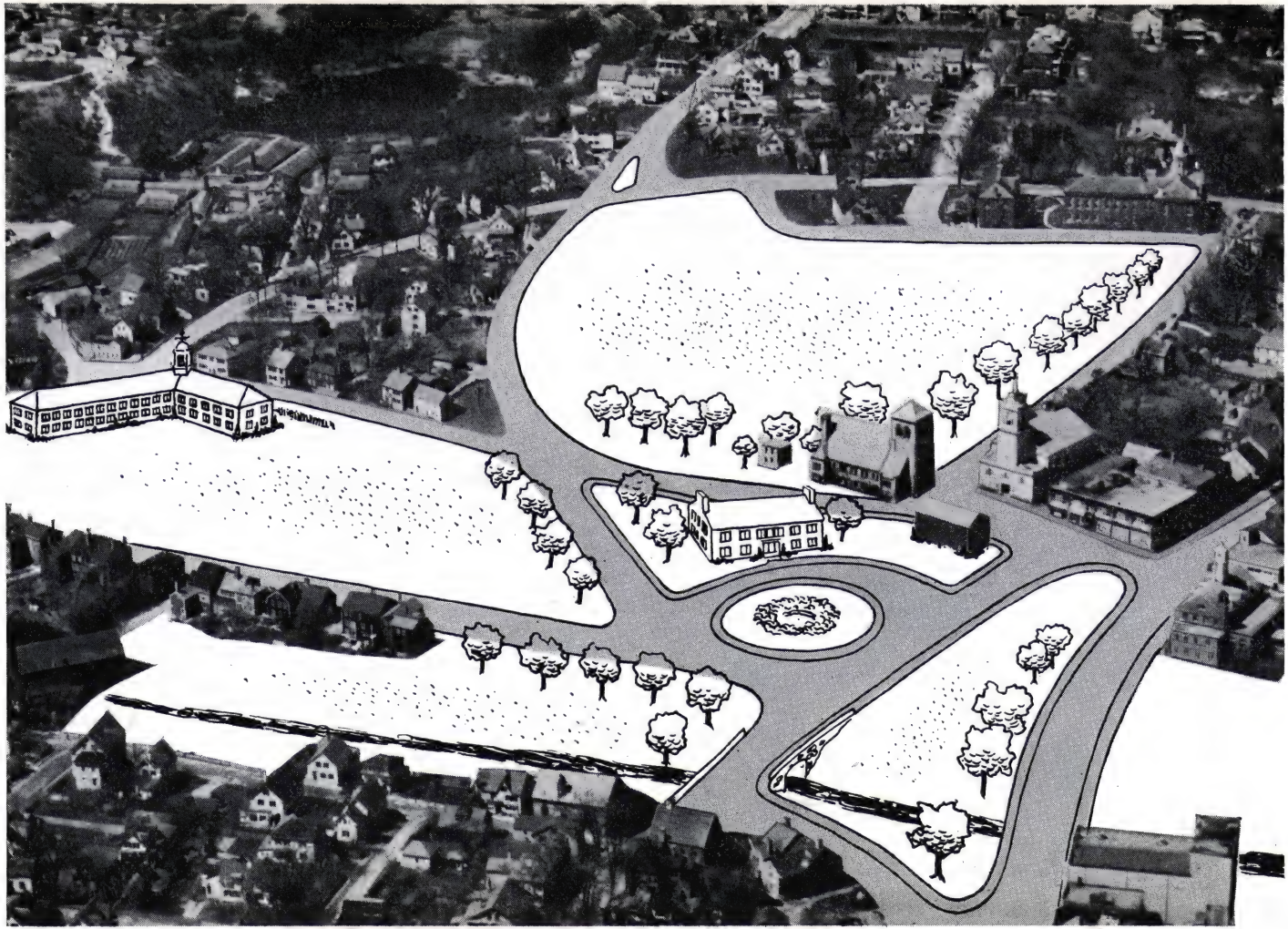
BOSTON, MASS

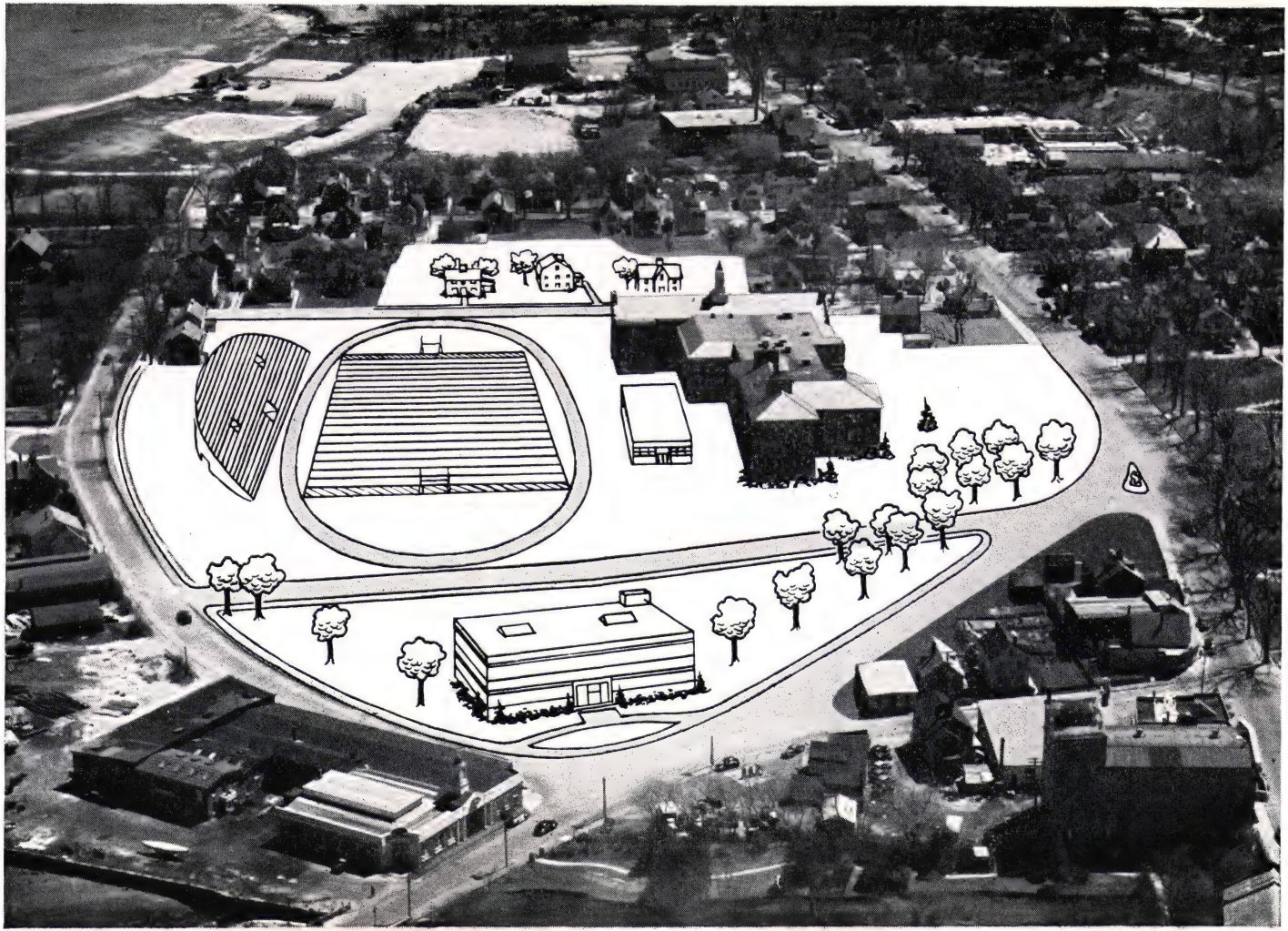
*ABOVE—You are looking, from the air, at an important central section of Plymouth. The open area, center, is Burial Hill. The First Church on Town Square is just below it. The lower end of Main Street is shown in the lower right. Summer Street runs horizontally from right of lower center to the left.*

*BELOW — This same area as it would look after the improvements recommended by the Plymouth Compact of 1949 were made. The new Town House is just below Burial Hill. The new Cornish-Burton School is at the far left. The Allerton Street Extension runs from the top center to cross a relocated High Street, center, and join Summer Street, lower center, to the left of the new Town House.*



*ABOVE—This aerial view of Plymouth shows the present High School, top center, and is bounded by Sandwich Street, right; Union Street, left; Lincoln Street, top; and Water Street, bottom.*

*BELOW—This same area as it would appear with the Compact recommendations. The High School is shown in the center. The new Junior High School is in the lower c*enter. The new Stadium and Athletic Field are at the left.



*Plymouth as it can be*

# *The Plymouth Compact*

*as it affects*

## *III. Playgrounds and Parks*

Plymouth is fortunate. It has a historical significance that draws Americans from every one of the 48 States. Every American reads and learns about Plymouth as "the landing place of the Pilgrims" or as "the birthplace of America." Everyone knows of Plymouth as the place of the first Thanksgiving. We have only to provide for the physical comforts of our visitors and to see that they have plenty of parks, play areas and sights to see.

Plymouth is fortunate, too, in that nature gave us thousands of acres of woodland, hundreds of ponds, sandy beaches, miles of seashore and a good harbor with which to work.

The combination of fine, natural recreational resources and historical significance has, however, created a problem for the citizens and taxpayers of Plymouth. We have had to expand and maintain these facilities — at an expense which is now a heavy burden. But there is a common sense solution.

For years, national, state and local park organizations have worked on this principle. Each user of our facilities should pay a fair share of the cost of building and maintaining the park and recreation area which he uses. We should apply that principle here in Plymouth without delay.

It is a principle which has met with general public approval and acceptance in all parts of the United States. It permits faster expansion of play area, improved equipment and facilities, and relieves the burden on the local taxpayers.

It is a principle that is fairly applied to any campground, trailer area, picnic area, controlled concessions, bathhouses and the like. It does not apply to locally used playgrounds and sports fields.

With this thought in mind — that our facilities for visitors can and should be made self-supporting — let's look at what we now have and what might be done with our natural resources.

First, let's examine those facilities which are of greatest value to our visitors as well as ourselves.

*There Is The Shore Front.* Our miles of beautiful shore front, along with a well-protected harbor, is one of our greatest natural assets. The view they offer, plus bathing facilities for great crowds of people, is our best means of capitalizing on these assets.

The changes necessary to fully capitalize on these assets are not difficult to achieve. Accessibility to the view and shore front will come naturally with the Shore Drive. This is a change which will also relieve traffic congestion as we have already said. More and better bathing is readily ours through elimination of sewage, (already a major health problem). Adequate channels and a larger mooring area will bring more visitors by water who will stay longer.

It is important to remember, too, that a large part of such improvements are entitled to state aid. Expenses, such as land-taking which may fall directly on the town can be spread over a number of years.

The Shore Front improvements between Town Wharf and Town Brook, are probably the most important single phase of the Compact as far as economic return is concerned. This area includes the Plymouth Rock, mecca of all visitors to Plymouth, and the replica of the Pilgrims' First House.

Our plans for this area propose a public bathing beach and a shore drive of park-like nature. To accomplish this

it is necessary to fill for some 200 feet out from the present sea wall, located between the two piers.

Such filling will produce multiple results. First it will give the town some six acres of centrally-located shoreland without land-takings; second, since the fill would be pumped and dredged from an area between the two wharves it automatically provides a new and needed mooring area; third, adequate space would be provided to beautify the new drive, and to bring the fine harbor view into focus; fourth, the visitor could see the Plymouth Rock location from about one-quarter of a mile away as compared with the present four hundred feet; fifth, it would create the needed public bathing beach near the center of the town.

The approaches or access roads to this area are described under "Shore Drive" and are integral parts of this development.

The bathing beach would extend from the Town Wharf to the State Pier. It would follow the new shore line and consist of a continuous beach of clean white sand rising to above normal high tide. It is planned to back the beach by a low riprap along the Shore Drive and to slope seaward to the new mooring area. A bathhouse and parking space between Shore Drive and Beach will complete this unit.

The parkland, including the already developed portion at Plymouth Rock, would when completed, be continuous from Town Brook to Town Wharf. The principal new portion is between the two wharves on the filled land, and could be landscaped with simple naturalistic planting of pines similar to those near Plymouth Rock.

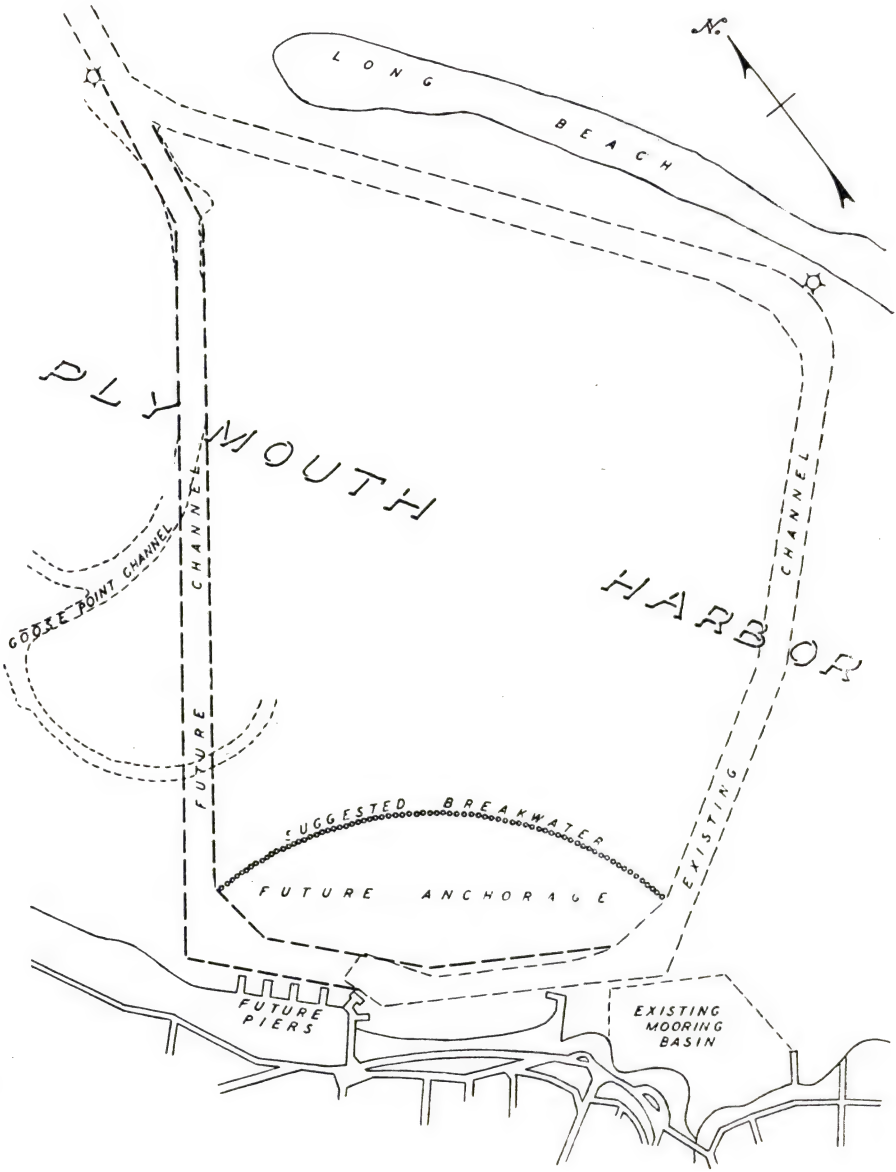
Water Street will be retained to serve as a local street with the proposed parkland lying between it and the new Shore Drive. Except for the added parking space at the Rock, no further change is proposed on the seaward side of the Shore Drive.

On the inland side, however, the town should eventually acquire the commercial properties near the Rock. Removal of these structures will permit a continuous, open, parklike treatment without interruption and make a far more suitable setting for a national shrine such as the Plymouth Rock.

*The Harbor Improvement.* This is first of all an aid to the fishing industry, already in need of larger facilities. Fishing is an old industry in Plymouth and well-adapted to the town's economy, geographical location and traditions. Representatives of the industry in Plymouth have given figures which show that the commercial value of fish handled in 1947 was $2,035,000. In 1947, 9 draggers, valued at $142,500 were locally owned. In 1948, 14 draggers were locally owned and 300 to 400 people were directly employed. Many others benefited indirectly by supplying food, fuel, ice, cordage and other necessities. Plymouth, the only logical port on Massachusetts Bay south of Boston, is in an ideal position to increase its harbor activity. Two improvements and an alternate choice are recommended to make the most of this asset.

1. *A Deep Water Anchorage and Breakwater.* These are proposed along with the widening and deepening of the present channel between Town Wharf and the State Pier. The suggested anchorage area is to be located on the off-shore side of the channel, running from Town Wharf to the present mooring basin at Town Brook. The breakwater would be located some three hundred yards from the shore and would protect the anchorage area and the wharves. Since it is located parallel to, and just off, the proposed bathing beach and parkland, it will form a practical combination with a pleasing appearance.

2. *Added Wharf Space.* More wharves are needed right now. Provision for these and future wharves to allow for the natural increase of the fishing industry is recommended.




PROPOSED HARBOR FACILITIES

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SCALE IN FEET

WHITMAN & HOWARD, ENGINEERS,
BOSTON, MASS.

The area suggested is along the waterfront on the town-owned land north of the Town Wharf. Most of this land is now leased and it is in the public interest that future leases provide for a right-of-way along the waterfront. Rights to build wharves can be given to private interests or semi-public organizations as desired.

3. *A Fish Pier.* A public fish pier, town-owned and large enough to serve about 40 fishing vessels is an alternative suggestion to 1 and 2 above. This pier could be in an L-shape to provide protected deep water for the entire fishing fleet. Such a pier would provide ample space for unloading and servicing many boats at one time. Space on the pier would be provided for buyers, packers, etc.

The present channel could then be extended beyond Town Wharf to serve this area. Eventually, this channel extension might well be connected with the Goose Point Channel to provide a route to the harbor mouth shorter by nearly one and one-half miles.

4. *A Port Authority.* The harbor and waterfront possibilities explored in this section are so far-reaching and involved that a Port Authority is recommended. This Authority could give full consideration to detailed plans and methods of financing these improvements. Either the State or Federal Government, possibly both, would contribute to certain parts of this type of development. A Port Authority properly authorized by appropriate legislation, would operate with funds raised by bond issues. These bonds are retired from the receipts of the Authority and would not affect the tax rate. This method is recommended by the Compact.

## IMPROVEMENTS ON OTHER PLAYGROUNDS AND PARKS

While the Shore Front and Harbor Improvements discussed so far are important economically to the Town, certain

other improvements are highly desirable for the general welfare of the citizens and their children.

*Town Brook Park* is proposed as an extension of the present Brewster Gardens to Spring Street where the brook joins Poor House Pond. If, in the future, the infirmary is moved, further extension along Poor House Pond would be most desirable.

Town Brook was the site of the original settlement of the Plymouth Colony. Being the southerly boundary and a protection from prowling Indians, it was a most important feature of the early settlement. Now, over 300 years later the area is still the center of population and ideally suited by both location and topography for use as a Park.

It is the intent of the Compact that this historic area be developed and featured as a year-round beauty spot. The main attraction could be, for example, an azalea and rhododendron garden, backed by evergreen trees, and located on the southerly slope between Market and Spring Streets. Paths paralleling the brook on each side, joined by a foot bridge would provide access and a means of enjoying the scene and its historic associations at close range.

The scope of this park includes most of the valley between Robinson and Summer Streets, and eventually, the entire triangle bordered by Main, Market and Sandwich Streets. It is recognized that this must be a long-range project due to the extent and present value of certain properties involved. An immediate start of improvements is recommended, however, on those portions now town-owned or readily available.

A glance at the accompanying illustrations will disclose that the proposed Town Brook Park, the existing Brewster Gardens, the park area at Plymouth Rock and the proposed shore development from the State Pier to the Town Wharf, provide a continuous belt of park. This continuity, com-

bined with wisely chosen planting to extend the season of bloom, will provide an attraction at practically all seasons of the year for the townspeople and our visitors.

*Morton Park* on Little Pond, with 100 acres of beautiful woodlands, is a great potential asset to the town. It is now a maintenance problem, impossible to supervise and subject to improper use. If this park is to be developed and maintained it must be partially self-supporting. Plymouth cannot afford to support this park properly with public funds.

The attendance can be stimulated by the right improvements. Nominal charges for good facilities will provide funds to make these improvements and to give proper supervision. Receipts from parking, boat rentals, bathhouse charges, etc., can provide much of the money needed for better roads, increased facilities and adequate maintenance.

*Beach Park* is now the nearest beach to Plymouth proper which is on the open ocean. Located on the highway, it allows a direct view of, and access to, the ocean. A sea wall protects part of this development but further protection is needed to prevent high seas from washing over and periodically blocking up the Eel River which flows in back.

Paving of the parking areas would be possible, and desirable, when this improvement is made. The area is now inadequate and hemmed in by miscellaneous buildings of a seasonal nature. Extension of the southerly parking area to include several of these privately-owned buildings would provide parking for several hundred cars. It would allow a fine view of the ocean, Long Beach and Rocky Point.

*Indian Reservation Park* in Manomet now has a well-equipped recreation center. Proper maintenance, however, has been economically impossible in recent years. Therefore, as at Morton Park, emphasis should be on improvements which will pay for themselves.

Attention is directed specifically to the Trailer Park. More

adequate fees could be charged if improved facilities were provided. It is further recommended that a maximum period of use be established for any one visitor. This would enable more people to enjoy the facilities.

*Nelson Street Playground* is an adequate local playground with provisions for all age groups. It is located on the Shore of Plymouth Harbor and has a good public bathhouse and bathing beach. This natural sandy beach would be excellent except for contamination by sewage, and erosion by wave action. The latter, along with maintenance costs, can be reduced by building jetties.

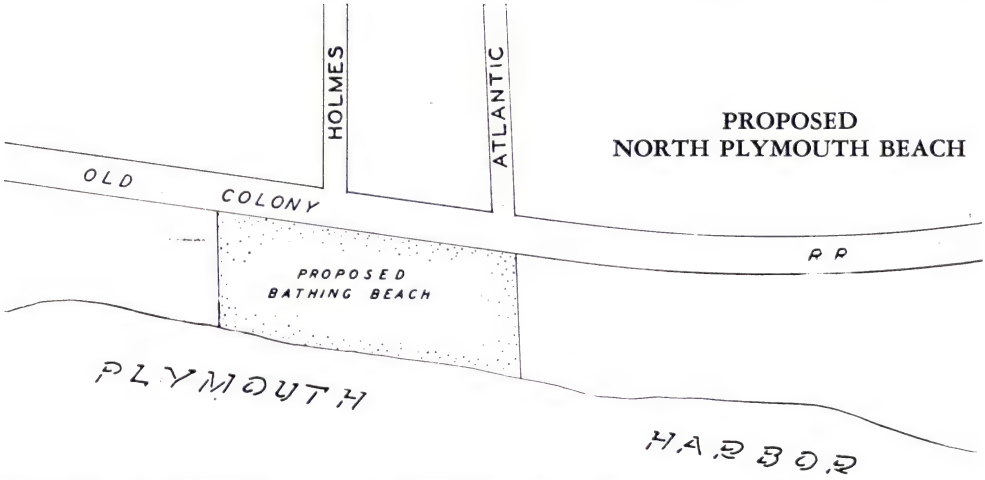
The Playground also includes a public trailer park with a toilet building and some electrification to individual plots. We recommend the discontinuance of the trailer park and the opening of this area to the public at large.

*North Plymouth Beach.* A public bathing beach near the end of Atlantic Street is proposed. This is a much-needed addition to the Town's recreational system. The site proposed runs southerly from Atlantic Street some 200 yards and includes the area between the railroad and the harbor. This land is now unimproved.

The development of this beach may be confined to acquiring the land, improving the beach proper and providing a parking space. A public bathhouse and toilets may be provided later if needed.

## PLAYGROUNDS

*Stephens Field,* located on the waterfront at the end of Union Street, is used principally by the High School for football and baseball. It is proposed that a field be developed at the High School which will free Stephens Field. This field may then be better used as a playfield for younger children and for softball. Two more tennis courts, in addition to the two now there, are recommended.

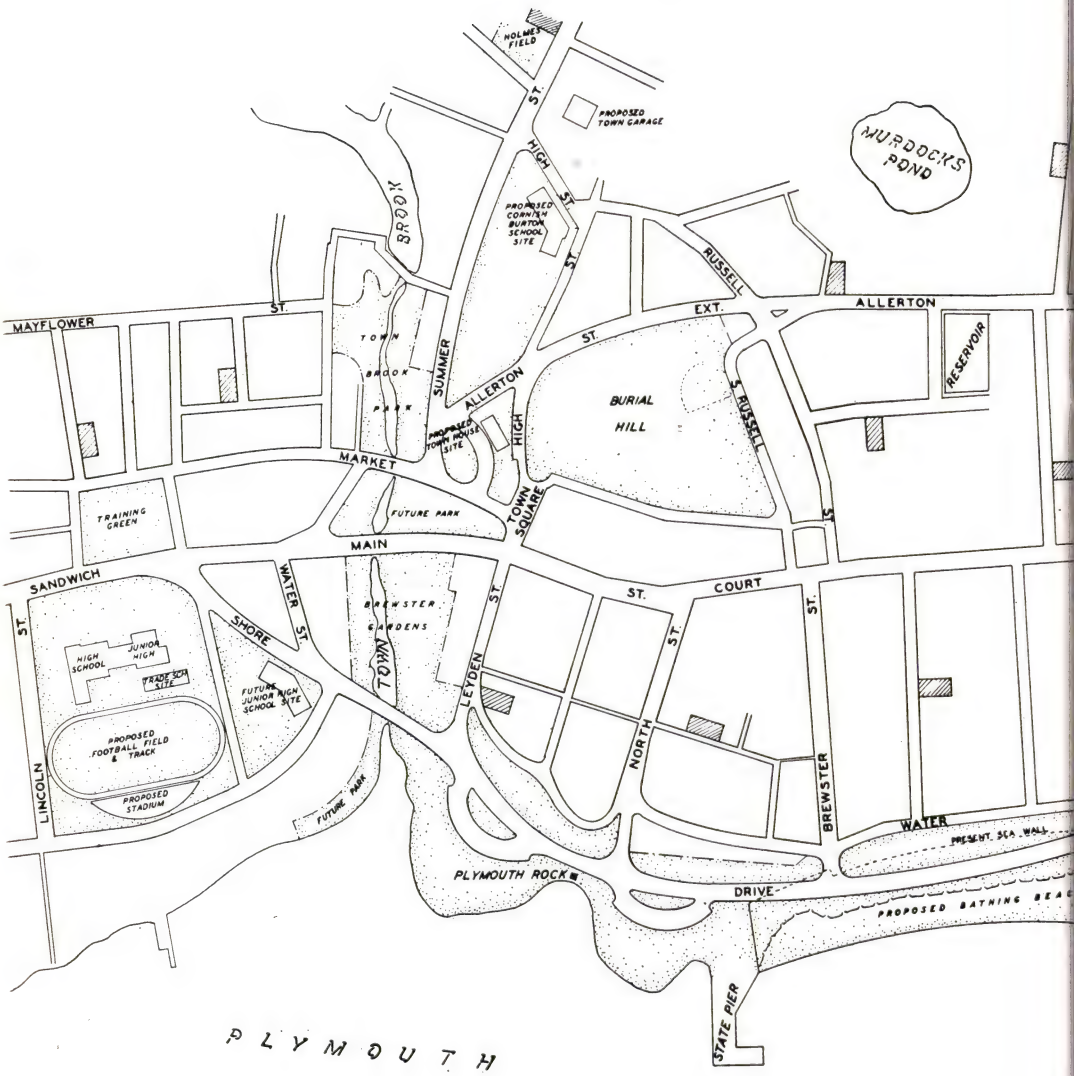



Automobile traffic now travels through this field from Union Street to Sandwich Street on an unpaved road. This road should be relocated, landscaped and paved. Stephens Field and Bangs Memorial Park could then be limited to the seaward side of this road and fenced to protect the children.

*An Athletic Field* at the High School is proposed to replace Stephens Field which is inadequate for its purpose. The new location suggested is directly adjacent to the High School and is planned to eventually use the entire area bounded by Bradford, Union and Lincoln Streets.

Enough of this land is now town-owned or readily available low-value property so that a football-baseball field and running track may be built. This improvement, located at the school, will aid materially in physical education.

A stadium or grandstand is proposed as a future addition. This will add a great deal to the public enjoyment and to the public support of school athletics. The entire development can be self-liquidating through admissions charged to an


HOLMES FIELD
PROPOSED TOWN GARAGE
MURDOCK'S POND
BROOK
HIGH ST.
PROPOSED CORNISH BURTON SCHOOL SITE
RUSSELL
EXT.
ALLERTON
MAYFLOWER ST.
TOWN BROOK PARK
SUMMER
ALLERTON ST.
BURIAL HILL
S. RUSSELL
RESERVOIR
PROPOSED TOWN HOUSE SITE
HIGH
MARKET
TRAINING GREEN
FUTURE PARK
TOWN SQUARE
MAIN
SANDWICH
WATER ST.
BREWSTER GARDENS
ST.
COURT
ST.
SHORE
HIGH SCHOOL
JUNIOR HIGH
TRADE SCH. SITE
FUTURE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL SITE
TOWN
LEYDEN ST.
NORTH ST.
BREWSTER ST.
LINCOLN ST.
PROPOSED FOOTBALL FIELD & TRACK
PROPOSED STADIUM
FUTURE PARK
WATER
PRESENT SEA WALL
PLYMOUTH ROCK
DRIVE
PROPOSED BATHING BEAC
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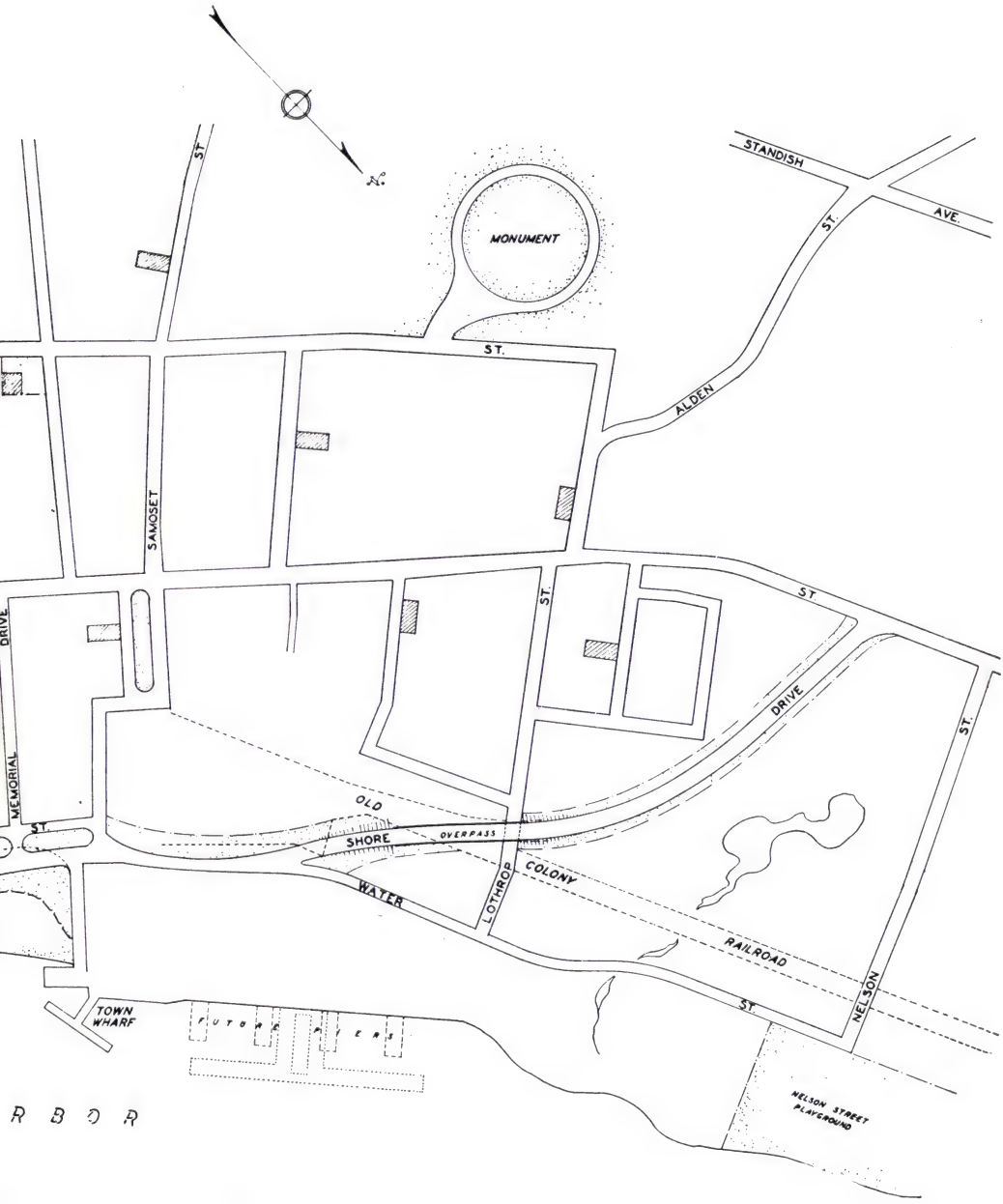


PROPOSED LOCAL PLAY AREAS SHOWN THUS

# INTOWN PARKS
## AND PUBLIC GROUNDS

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SCALE IN FEET

WHITMAN & HOWARD, ENGINEERS,
BOSTON MASS.

attendance stimulated and increased by first-class facilities.

*Standish Avenue Field* will be a first-class athletic field when it is completed as planned. The baseball field and grandstand are already complete. The field house is started. It is recommended that the town give early consideration to the development of the football field.

*Veterans Field* is an adequate smaller playground. One more tennis court is needed and the present one needs rebuilding. More maintenance is also necessary.

*Holmes Field* is also an adequate local playground. The dangerous condition which now exists because of the fish-ladder crossing the grounds, and without means to prevent children falling in, should be corrected. Proper boundary fences are also needed to assure the children's safety.

*South Street Playground* is a local playground, equipped for small children. The present tennis court is not used and could be removed to provide space for larger children as well.

*Local Play Areas* for the younger children are urgently needed. Small children should be able to play near home. The area needed for such local playgrounds is not more than a good size house lot. The equipment is relatively simple and inexpensive, consisting of swings, slides and the like. It is recommended, therefore, that immediate action be taken to provide these local playgrounds which would not be expensive to maintain. The locations proposed for them are indicated on the accompanying plans.

# *The Plymouth Compact*

*as it affects*

## *IV. Sewage Disposal*

The sewage of the more thickly settled parts of Plymouth and North Plymouth is now discharged by pipe into Plym-

outh Harbor at eight locations. These outlets are located as follows:

1. Holmes Point — One 12″ pipe extends into the harbor about 1600 feet and sewers a small area which includes Jabez Corner.
2. Winter Street — A 6″ pipe extends into the harbor about 800 feet and sewers Winter Street.
3. State Pier — A large pipe extends into the harbor for about 600 feet and sewers the bulk of Plymouth proper.
4. Puritan Mills — A 30″ pipe, at the waterfront opposite Puritan Mills, discharges near the beach and sewers Puritan Mills and a small area in that vicinity.
5. Robbins Lane — Just south of the lumber yard and Robbins Lane, a 16″ pipe extends into the harbor and sewers part of North Plymouth.
6. Hedge Road — There is an outlet at the foot of Hedge Road which sewers a portion of the area between North Plymouth business district and the Cordage Company plant. This outlet does not function properly and at certain times deposits sewage on the beach.
7. Cordage — An outlet, which sewers most of the Cordage plant, discharges near the shore.
8. Cordage — There is a second outlet at the Cordage plant. It sewers a considerable residential area and discharges near the shore. Originally built by the Cordage Company, it first served company-owned homes but much of this property is now privately owned.

Sewage at all eight outlets is discharged into Plymouth Harbor untreated. The presence of this untreated sewage in the water and on the beaches is a menace to health. It seriously reduces the value and enjoyment of a great natural asset — our shore front and harbor.

Recent research shows that Polio virus is prevalent in sewage. This is particularly dangerous for children. Adult

bathers are likely to obey the restrictions on bathing but children tend to disregard them. So children, even more than adult bathers, are exposed to a definite health hazard.

The Town of Plymouth obviously recognized some of these conditions back in 1930 when it hired consulting engineers to make recommendations. These engineers reported on three methods of disposal, as follows:

1. Treatment at an inland plant, on land off Cherry Street, one and one-half miles from the harbor and adjacent to the right-of-way of the former Plymouth & Middleboro Railroad.
2. Treatment close to the shore at Holmes Point.
3. Disposal at sea, 4,000 feet northeast of the shore at Rocky Point, at a depth of 45 feet at low tide.

Eighteen years have elapsed since that study was made. New legislation has since been enacted. Requirements and practices have changed. The cost of doing all work has increased and the costs of doing different types of work have changed in their relationships.

Under today's conditions, therefore, it is recommended that a treatment plant be built in the vicinity of the shore and the sewage be discharged into the harbor after it has been rendered unobjectionable.

The plant itself should be of the complete treatment type so that treated materials could be safely discharged into the nearby channel. There would be no odor, nor would sewage be exposed to the atmosphere or view, in a completely enclosed plant. In appearance, the plant would consist of several low tank-like structures which could be practically concealed.

The elimination of sewage from the harbor is a major project, one which is important to all and which must receive attention at an early date. The State has already of-

ficially brought this to the attention of the Town and under present laws has the authority to compel us to correct this condition.

The most economical and satisfactory method of correction has been outlined above. Even so, it means a large investment. It is proposed that a substantial part of the cost of this improvement be assessed against those properties connected to, or with access to, the sewer system either by a use tax or by a sewer district. In any case, some form of sewer tax is recommended as the most equitable method of paying for this improvement and should not materially affect the general tax rate. It is recommended that this be given immediate attention.

# *The Plymouth Compact*

*as it affects*

## *V. Retail Trade and Industry*

Industry is of primary importance to the town's economic welfare. Expansion of our industrial and business area is of vital importance to Plymouth.

There are two miles of railroad in the town, much of it passing through undeveloped but usable solid ground, convenient to the local labor market. There is also filled land, north of Town Wharf, which can be easily reached with a spur track. This is town-owned property, exceptionally well-located, and if used for manufacturing, would be an asset to the community.

The town should encourage industrial expansion but at the same time should control it. This subject is covered more fully under "Zoning" in the Section on TOWN GOVERNMENT. It might be stressed here that no restriction for present establishments is proposed.

*Retail Trade.* Plymouth is a natural trading center for an area with about 40,000 population. Whatever steps are necessary to protect and improve this substantial retail trade should be taken in the interest of the town's economic health.

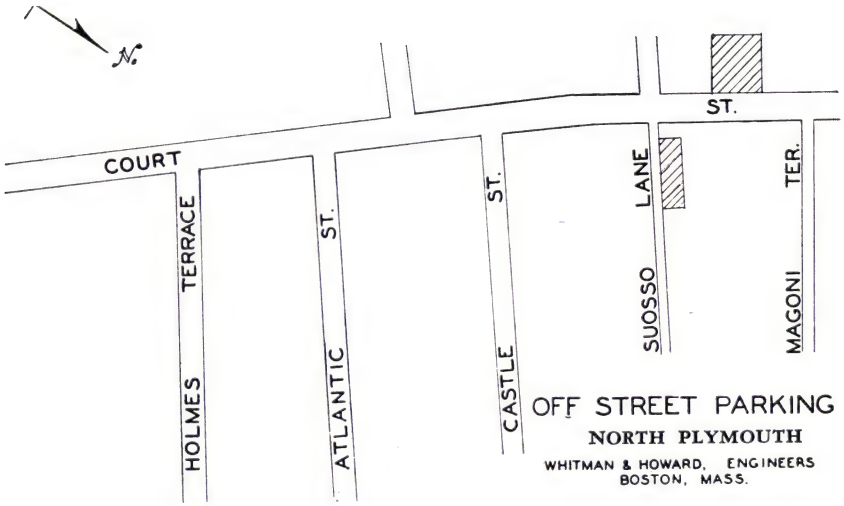
The area between Leyden and Chilton Streets, along Main and Court Streets, now contains the principal retail business of the town. There is, however, no business at all at its approximate geographical center, namely, Brewster and Court Streets.

This is a condition that may well change and it is in the Town's interest that this change be controlled. Immediate action in the appointment of a Zoning Committee to study and recommend controls is proposed.

Traffic congestion and bad parking conditions have had an adverse effect on retail trade. Suggestions for the correction of these conditions have been made in the Section on TRAFFIC FLOW. They include the new by-pass, parking meters, new roads, off-street parking and other methods.

There is another aid to retail trade which should be encouraged . . . that is the improvement of the appearance of our shopping district. People coming to Plymouth expect to find a Colonial town. They look for "New England." Civic-minded merchants have already taken some steps in this direction by using Colonial store fronts when remodeling. Others are planning to do so. Each of those who have already remodeled have found it economically worthwhile and other merchants should be encouraged to do the same as rapidly as possible.

*North Plymouth Business Center.* The retail center at




North Plymouth is reasonably compact. It does suffer from a narrow street and traffic congestion. This condition will be improved by certain changes now taking place and the application of other remedies suggested in the Compact.

Reduction of through traffic, when the new State by-pass is complete, will largely relieve present dangerous, congested conditions. Off-street parking areas, provision for rear-door truck deliveries and parking on one side of the street only, are other proposals which will in effect widen the street.

Off-street parking in North Plymouth is emphasized and specifically recommended. The suggested locations are between Suosso Lane and Magoni Terrace. One location, just east of Court Street, can be provided by acquiring land on the north side of Suosso Lane. This land is about 50 feet deep and 200 feet long. The second location is on the west side of Court Street, in the block opposite Suosso Lane and Magoni Terrace. It is now residential property. Both are conveniently located for the shopper in North Plymouth.

# *The Plymouth Compact*

*as it affects*

## *VI. Town Government*

Local government, built around the institution known as Town Meeting, is a contribution to the science of government which had its beginning in Plymouth 329 years ago.

The first civil act of the Pilgrims was the adoption of the "Compact" in the cabin of the Mayflower. At the same time a Governor was chosen, and these acts constituted the first Town Meeting. Since that time the tradition of government by direct vote and participation of the citizens of the town has continued without interruption and is still in force today.

The first elected officials of the Colony were a Governor and assistants but after the organization of separate towns within the Colony, the office of Selectmen became established for the government of the several towns.

For many years the Selectmen were able to perform all of the functions of government but as the towns grew in size and the activities of the town broadened in scope, other town offices were established to relieve the duties of the Selectmen. Notwithstanding this relief, the Selectmen are still the most burdened of Town Officials and have under their control about one-half of the Town's thirty departments. The remaining departments are administered by elected officials and all have grown in size and activity so that in 1947 there were employed by all departments some 378 persons of whom 267 were full-time employees.

The original framework of Town Government has served

us well for more than 300 years and we have no desire to change it in principle, but the practical administration of town affairs has now become so complex as to require some revision in the interest of efficiency and economy.

With the tremendous increase in cost of government many towns have given consideration to changes in administrative procedures. The idea of government by "Town Manager" has been tried by some towns but has not proven effective in Massachusetts.

More recently, certain towns in the Commonwealth have petitioned the General Court for authority to make changes in their governmental structures. Some of these plans have been enacted and are popularly known as the Plan E system. Others merely permit the grouping of certain activities under one head thereby reducing the number of departments.

The only thing these various systems have in common is that they stem from a mutual desire to arrest the upward spiral of the cost of local government.

Examination of some of these systems or plans discloses many theoretical advantages but also some very practical weaknesses. The Compact of 1949 proposes certain regrouping of activities which will insure a maximum of efficiency and economy with a minimum of disruption and change in operating personnel. The recommendations represent a combination of the best features of the various new concepts and theories studied.

Most of the activities of the Town will be placed in the hands of administrators chosen by the Selectmen for their professional qualifications and abilities. They will serve for definite terms and will be in a position to operate their departments free of political pressure.

By the same token the Selectmen will be relieved of much of the administrative detail with which they are now burdened and will be able to devote more time to the determina-

tion of general policy and the promotion of worthwhile and forward-looking community studies.

The broad recommendation of the Compact cannot be accomplished without legislative authority. So it is recommended that a special committee be organized by vote of the Town to make the needed detailed studies and report to a subsequent meeting with drafts of proposed legislation.

Specific recommendations as to the type of changes suggested, follow.

*The Proposed Town Government Organization*

The Town Meeting, under this proposed form, would continue as at present. The limited form of town meeting is not recommended as the traditional open assembly handles its business well and there is ample space for such meetings.

It is proposed that the some 30 separate activities of the Town Government be reduced to about 17 by consolidation of departments. Their requirements on the Selectmen, under this kind of reorganization, would be immediately and greatly reduced.

It is also proposed that the duties of public boards be limited to determining policy and that the details of administration be executed through paid, full-time executives in the particular departments.

New efficiency and its resulting economies will be achieved by such a program. Detailed, specific recommendations concerning these proposed changes will be found below:

It is recommended that the annual election of Town Officers be held at three polling places, one each in North Plymouth, Plymouth proper and Manomet. The locations to be designated by the Selectmen. This would provide the opportunity for more voters to participate. There would be elected each year the following:

Five members of Board of Selectmen to serve for one year, thus providing a five-member Board as at present.

One member of new Planning Board to serve five years, thus providing a five-member Planning Board.

(Note: To establish this new Board, five members would be elected in the first year—terms varying from one to five years.)

Two members of the school committee to serve three years, thus providing a six-member school committee as at present.

One member of a Board of Assessors to serve three years, thus providing a 3-member Board as at present.

One member of Board of Public Welfare to serve three years, thus providing a 3-member Board as at present.

One moderator to serve for one year.

The Town Clerk, not shown above, would continue to be elected once every three years as at present; one treasurer to serve for three years as at present; one collector to serve for three years as at present.

*The Board of Selectmen* would continue as a Board of five elected yearly. They would retain the powers vested in them by law except as changes are recommended in the proposals that follow. They would be the chief fiscal officers of the Town Government and would see that all affairs of the Town are handled with due prudence and in accordance with law. They would issue certain permits and licenses substantially as they now do. They would continue to appoint yearly the Town Counsel; a veterans' service officer; a Town Accountant each three years.

*A Public Works Commission* to build and maintain essential public works and enterprises is proposed. This Board would coordinate as divisions of one department the many separate departments now engaged in public works. This system is used to great advantage in many towns and cities in Massachusetts and is of particular value to Plymouth with its numerous public needs, spread over a great area.

This department would combine the present water, sewer, highway, park, cemetery, tree, moth and engineering departments and also take care of such miscellaneous activities as the Town Forest, harbor waterfront, shellfish fisheries and similar activities. The related work of these departments and the duplication of men and equipment under separate management is obvious. The opportunity here exists for the Town of Plymouth to put these departmental activities which cost over $300,000 in 1947, under a proven business-like setup providing efficiency and economy.

Equipment of the various divisions of Public Works would be available for the peak needs of each division. This will greatly reduce the need of hiring equipment. Also the planned selection of equipment which will be interchangeable for various activities will add greatly to efficiency; for example, a town-owned, truck mounted, power shovel in the Department of Public Works, with attachments could be used for highway construction, laying drains, water and sewer mains, grading and draining park and cemetery areas, etc., thus saving the Town substantial sums, in the cost of labor, small contracts and hiring of equipment.

*Purchasing* of equipment, materials, fuel and supplies would be on a combined basis and under skilled supervision. This combined with carefully-recorded and supervised issuance of same would result in substantial savings in cost as has been proven by other municipalities.

The Town Garage proposed under "Public Buildings" would be a very important adjunct to the Public Works Department. This building would house public works vehicles and heavy equipment at one location. This would provide opportunity to service and repair this valuable equipment with Town-employed, skilled men and at considerable savings to the Town, over the present custom of placing work with various commercial garages. One particular ad-

vantage of this facility is the possibility of placing, with the aid of an inventory system, all equipment, fuel, supplies, etc. under constant control and supervision.

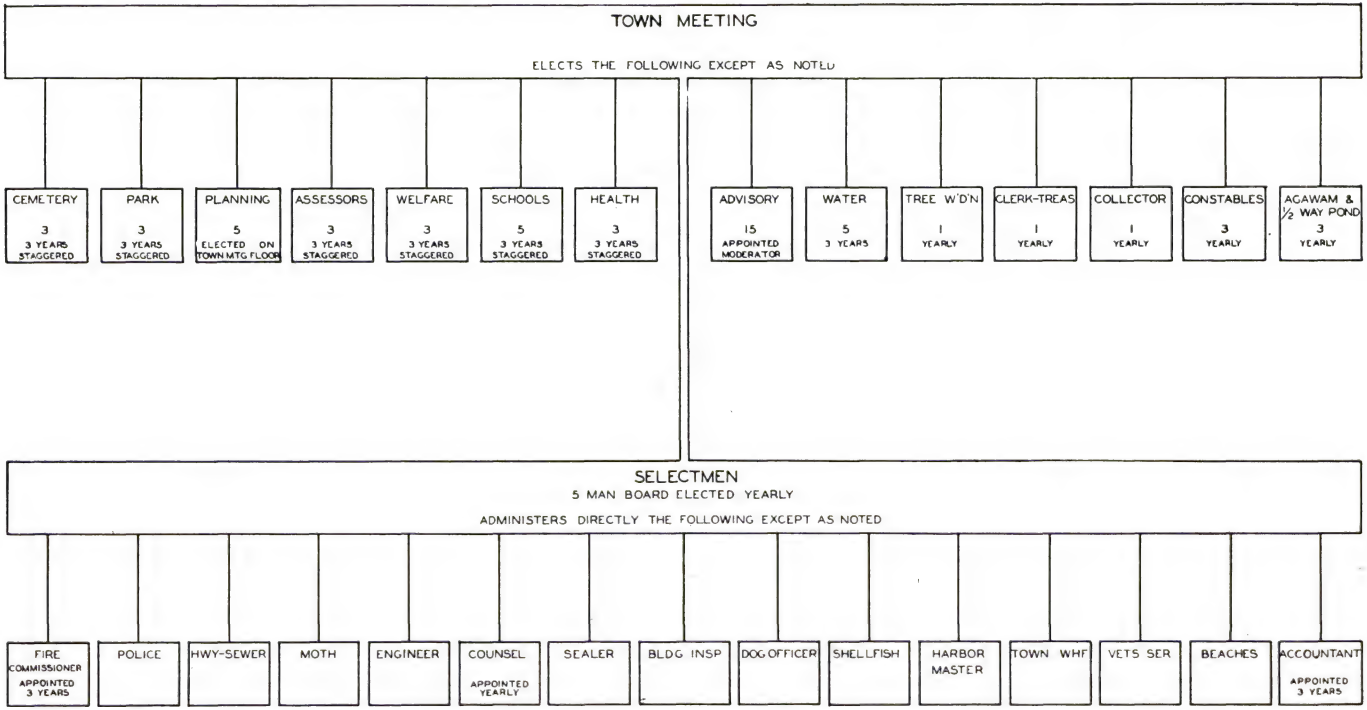
The Public Works Commission would be unpaid and consist of five members appointed by the Selectmen for five years each, the terms so arranged that one new member is named yearly.

A Superintendent of Public Works, employed by the Commission is proposed, who would be a full-time executive employee of the Town, a man fitted by education, experience and ability to direct and coordinate the various technical activities in his charge.

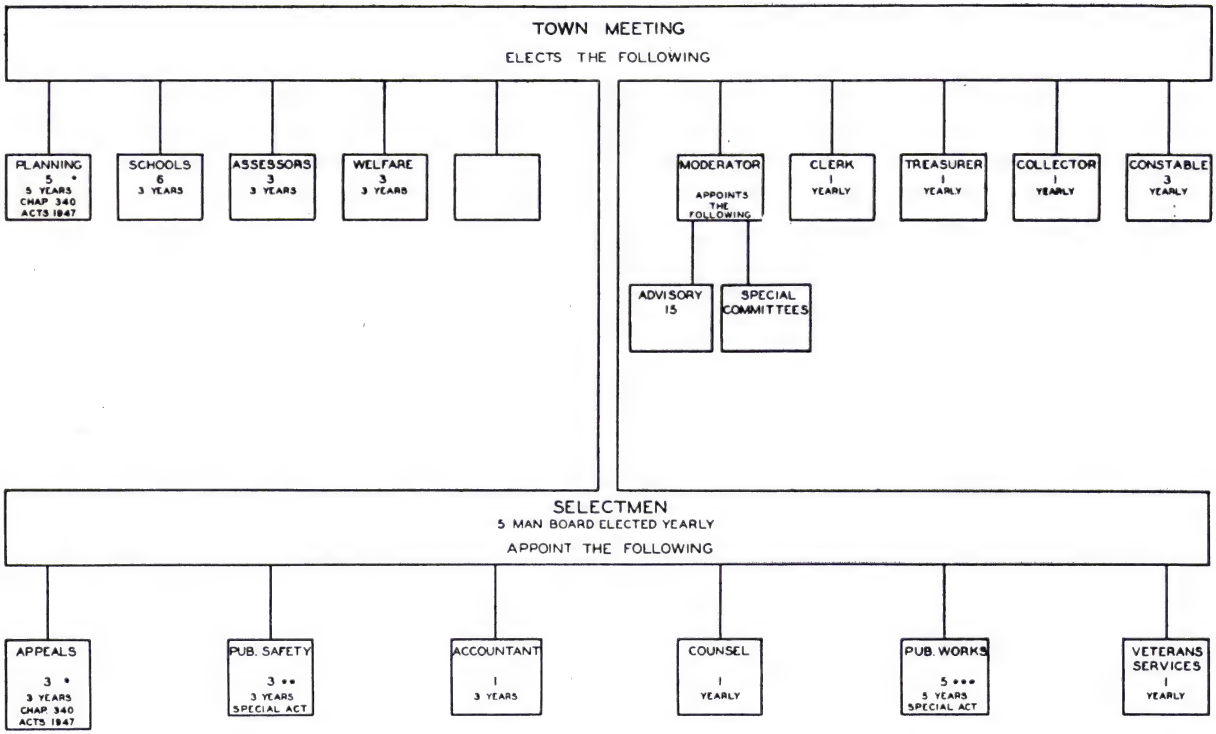
The personnel of the departments included would be assigned in general to their present activities. Duplication of personnel would be avoided by transfer from one division to another. No substantial reduction in permanent, full-time employees is anticipated and it is proposed that any new or expanded activities be placed in the charge of existing supervisory personnel. The need of temporary and part-time personnel to meet the peak needs of divisions would be greatly reduced by temporary transfers of permanent men from one division to another.

The savings, increased benefits and efficiency resulting from such a public works organization are so far-reaching that its early adoption is strongly recommended.

*A Public Safety Commission* to administer and coordinate the departments which guard the health, safety and morals of the public is recommended. As presently constituted, no central authority is responsible for the coordinated efforts of health, fire and police departments and building, wire and plumbing inspection. However, all of these separate agencies of Government, although not acting together, are responsible for conditions at the same places, such as where the public gathers — hotels, restaurants, public buildings and places




EXISTING TOWN GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION – DEPARTMENTAL ORIGIN CHART


TOWN MEETING
ELECTS THE FOLLOWING
PLANNING 5 * 5 YEARS CHAP. 340 ACTS 1947
SCHOOLS 6 3 YEARS
ASSESSORS 3 3 YEARS
WELFARE 3 3 YEARS
MODERATOR APPOINTS THE FOLLOWING
CLERK 1 YEARLY
TREASURER 1 YEARLY
COLLECTOR 1 YEARLY
CONSTABLE 3 YEARLY
ADVISORY 15
SPECIAL COMMITTEES
SELECTMEN
5 MAN BOARD ELECTED YEARLY
APPOINT THE FOLLOWING
APPEALS 3 * 3 YEARS CHAP. 340 ACTS 1947
PUB. SAFETY 3 ** 3 YEARS SPECIAL ACT
ACCOUNTANT 1 3 YEARS
COUNSEL 1 YEARLY
PUB. WORKS 5 *** 5 YEARS SPECIAL ACT
VETERANS SERVICES 1 YEARLY

*PLANNING BOARD - APPEALS BOARD
PLANNING BOARD IS BOARD OF SURVEY. PROVIDES OFFICIAL MAP. REGULATES SUBDIVIDING OF LAND AND INITIATES ZONING LAWS
APPEALS BOARD MAY OVERRULE DECISIONS OF BUILDING INSPECTOR AND PLANNING BOARD WITHIN LIMITS OF LAW.

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION GUARDS THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND MORALS OF THE PUBLIC —— CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS —— POLICE, FIRE, SEALER OF WEIGHTS, INSPECTION OF ANIMALS, SLAUGHTERING, MEATS, ETC. HEALTH OFFICER. DOG OFFICER. INSPECTION OF BUILDINGS, WIRES AND PLUMBING.

***PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION BUILDS AND/OR MAINTAINS ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES AND ENTERPRISES —— CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS — WATER, SEWER, PARKS, CEMETERY, GARBAGE, HIGHWAY, ENGINEER, TREE MOTH, TOWN FOREST, HARBOR, WATERFRONT, SHELLFISH, FISHERIES, ETC.

PROPOSED TOWN GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION - DEPARTMENTAL ORIGIN CHART

of amusement. ***All of these now separate agencies are responsible for the safety of the public.***

This Commission would administer the present health, fire and police departments, and a reorganized and strengthened inspection department. The inspection department will need adoption of adequate by-laws in relation to building, plumbing, wiring, zoning, health, etc. in order to function effectively. The system will provide one common head; namely, the Commission, with all the related information necessary to guide it in making decisions and will serve to make available to it all related evidence necessary for enforcement. The Public Safety Department would be thus organized so that it could readily enforce the applicable laws and by-laws in an efficient and practical manner.

The Public Safety Commission would be unpaid and consist of three members, appointed by the Selectmen for three years each, the terms so arranged that one new member is named yearly.

Greatly improved morale in the departments included would be obtained by this type of competent non-political administration. Great improvements in efficiency and public safety would be obtained through such an administration, although no reduction in personnel or over-all savings in cost are anticipated.

*Zoning,* to preserve existing values and to insure future investments against encroachments by unregulated land use, is badly needed in Plymouth. The details of zoning as applied to Plymouth are too numerous to determine within the scope of this report. The principal objectives are as follows:

(a) To preserve existing property values by forbidding the use of land for buildings or activities not conforming to the present general use of each zone. This cannot by law apply to non-conforming uses which exist prior to the establishment of zoning; for example, a factory or store now existing

in a residential area cannot be forced out.

(b) To guard future investments by defining the type of development which can grow up around them, thus over a long-range building the pattern of the Town.

Experience has shown that it is necessary for a municipality to adopt some form of zoning in order to protect existing property values and to encourage new construction.

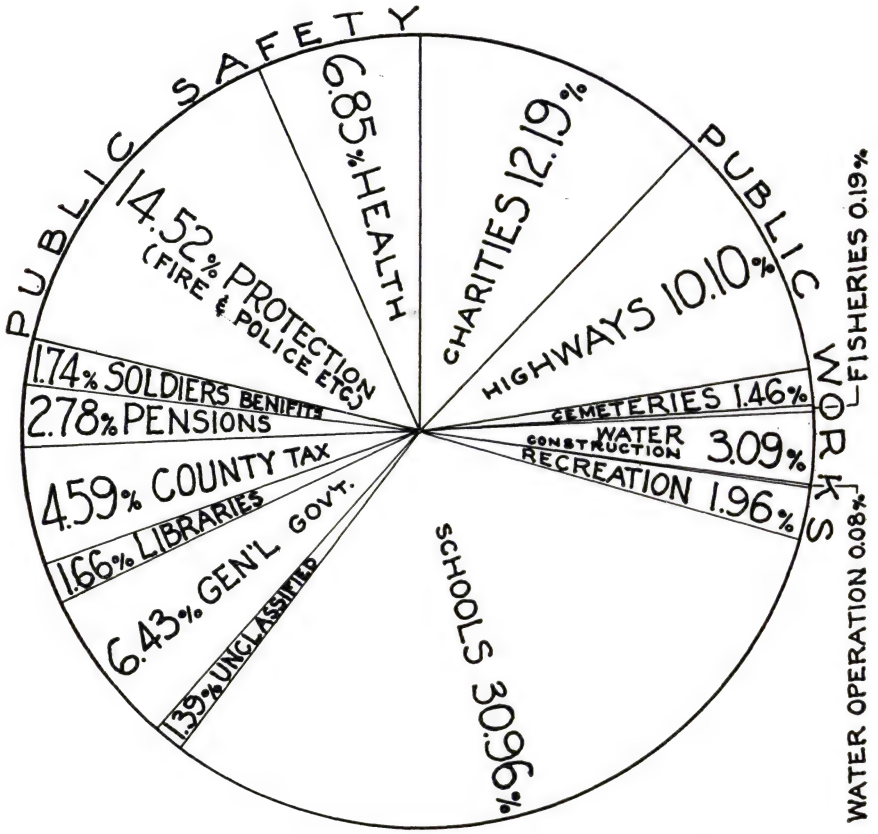
The adoption of a zoning plan and *moderate* zoning by-laws is proposed. The appointment of a committee to prepare and present a plan at an early date is recommended.

*A Planning Board* of modern type with broad powers is proposed. Specific legislation under Chapter 340, Acts of 1947, already exists which the Town may adopt simply by a vote of the Town Meeting. It is recommended that this Act be accepted at the next Town Meeting. The law provides that the existing Planning Board receive these new powers immediately on adoption and continue in office until the next regular election. Subsequently, the Planning Board would consist of five members, elected for 5-year terms so arranged that one new member would be elected each year. This would be an unpaid board, as at present.

This law provides that the Planning Board act as the Board of Survey with power to regulate the subdivision of land, layout of new streets and similar duties. This Board would be authorized to consider and promote "The Compact" as outlined under Section II. "The Compact" is an outline, each phase of which will require detailed studies and estimates. It would be the duty of the Planning Board, after considering relative need, to present, from time to time, these details for consideration of the Town Meeting.

This new type of Planning Board is needed in Plymouth and the immediate adoption of the appropriate statute is recommended.

# PLYMOUTH, MASS.
## 1947




# HOW THE TOWN GOVERNMENT DOLLAR WAS SPENT

ADJUSTED TO SHOW NET COSTS
AFTER RECEIPTS AND GRANTS

# *The Plymouth Compact*

## *A Summary of the Conclusions and Recommendations*

The foregoing report is the result of two years of careful and thoughtful study. Your committee has considered the problems, suggestions, and ideas of all the town's department heads, civic leaders, and outside professional planners. We have tried to separate the wheat from the chaff, and present to you a long-range program that we feel is both possible of achievement and for the best interest of the Town.

We fully realize that our plan as presented in this Compact is of very far-reaching scope. We ask that you do not let its magnitude scare you. If you approve of your "Plymouth as it can be" as we have herewith presented it, please think of it as we have — a goal to be accomplished step by step as conditions, needs, and the wishes of you the voters dictate. No one knows how long it may take. But if its fulfillment is desirable you can start it on its way, add a little each year, and by following the over-all pattern, eventually accomplish its realization. It is of the greatest importance that if this plan is ever to be fulfilled, each step that is taken in the years to come, whether it be large or small, be so taken that it fits into and becomes a workable part of the over-all long-range objective.

*Recommendations*

Certain of the recommendations of the Plan require immediate action and are presented below:

(1) The Planning Board should be granted the additional authority provided by Chapter 340 of the Acts of 1947. The

adoption of this Statute by the Town will make the Planning Board an instrument of increased utility to the community and will provide the power to prevent many of the abuses in the laying out of ways and development of land which have occurred in the past.

This Act may be adopted by simple vote of the Town and the authority provided thereby will immediately vest in the existing Planning Board. No additional appropriation of funds is needed for the accomplishment of this purpose.

(2) *Zoning* to regulate future land use is desperately needed if present and future land values are to be protected. The Compact recommends a moderate zoning law. A zoning law, even a simple one, as proposed for Plymouth, is quite lengthy and requires careful study. It is therefore doubly important that an immediate start be made. The action required now is the appointment of a special committee by the Town Meeting to prepare this law. The Town will then have the opportunity to accept this law at the next subsequent Town Meeting. No appropriation will be needed by this Committee.

(3) *Sewage Disposal* is a most pressing need in Plymouth. The pollution of Plymouth Harbor resulting from discharging untreated sewage therein, is a great economic detriment to the community, but principally it is a health menace. It is recommended that a special committee be appointed at the coming Town Meeting to secure an engineer's report outlining the modern method of sewage disposal including a report of estimated cost and method of financing. This committee will require an appropriation of $2,500.

(4) *Elementary Schools.* As noted in our report, there are many factors involved in properly arranging the location of our smaller schools that take care of the first six grades. The element of time and economic conditions will have a definite effect on this situation. Some major steps to correct

the present setup are imperative. Of first importance is the building of the new Cold Spring School on the Alden Street site proposed in the Compact. Of equal importance, the Mt. Pleasant School should be improved and adequate assembly facilities provided. These two projects could take care of the increased and probably relocated school population for some few years, and we recommend immediate action by the Town. This will eliminate need for the present Cornish-Burton School site. When a new Cornish-Burton School does become necessary, the Compact has provided for an ideal location for this school, as noted in the text and maps.

(5) The fishing industry is expanding, it is potential big business for Plymouth as it was years ago. Plymouth needs industry, this industry needs help from the Town. It is recommended that the Selectmen be directed to explore the needs and possibilities of the fishing industry, that they take such action as is within their power, and report to the next subsequent Town Meeting their findings and recommendations. No appropriation is required.

*Engineers and Municipal Planners*
Whitman & Howard
Boston, Massachusetts

*Special Survey and Coordinating Committee*

Kenwood Ellis, Chairman

Franklin A. Hyland

C. Mackinnon

M. S. Eustrom

Alton W. Eder

Henry Keyserling

Amedeo V. Sgarzi

# TOWN MAP OF PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS

WHITMAN & HOWARD, ENGINEERS BOSTON, MASS.

1949

SCALE IN FEET

1 ALLERTON STREET EXTENSION
2 SHORE DRIVE
3 PRESENT MOORING BASIN
4 FUTURE MOORING BASIN
5 FUTURE WHARVES
PROPOSED BREAKWATER
6 GARAGE (PROPOSED)
7 TOWN HOUSE
8 PLYMOUTH BEACH (PROPOSED)
9 NORTH PLYMOUTH BEACH (PROPOSED)
10 BEACH PARK
11 TOWN BROOK PARK
12 INDIAN RESERVATION
13 NELSON STREET PLAYGROUND
14 MORTON PARK
15 STEPHENS FIELD & BEACH
16 SOUTH STREET PLAYGROUND
17 HOLMES PLAYGROUND
18 VETERANS FIELD
19 STANDISH AVENUE PLAYGROUND
20 BREWSTER GARDENS
21 OLD HIGH SCHOOL
22 HIGH & JR HIGH SCHOOL
23 FUTURE JR HIGH SCHOOL
24 PRESENT CORNISH-BURTON SCHOOLS
25 PROPOSED CORNISH-BURTON SCHOOL
26 PRESENT COLD SPRING SCHOOL
27 PROPOSED COLD SPRING SCHOOL
28 MANOMET SCHOOL
29 MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOL
30 KEDGE SCHOOL
31 OAK STREET SCHOOL

PLYMOUTH HARBOR
CAPE COD BAY
PLYMOUTH BAY
DUXBURY BAY
WARREN COVE